

FAVOURITE CLASSICS :
The Plays of Shakespeare.

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

A Critical Study

By GEORGE BRANDES

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THE PLAYS OF
SHAKESPEARE

LOVE'S LABOUR'S
LOST

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
GEORGE BRANDES

and a Plate representing Mrs. BULKELEY as
'The Princess of France.'



LONDON
WILLIAM HEINEMANN
1904

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INTRODUCTION.

I.

THERE are several reasons, partly metrical (the frequency of rhymes), partly technical (the dramatic weakness of the play), for supposing *Love's Labour's Lost* to be Shakespeare's earliest comedy. Many allusions point to 1589 as the date of this play in its original form. For instance, the dancing horse mentioned in i. 2 was first exhibited in 1589; the names of the characters, Biron, Longaville, Dumain (Duc du Maine), suggest those of men who were prominent in French politics between 1581 and 1590; and, finally, when we remember that the King of Navarre, as the Princess's betrothed, becomes heir to the throne of France, we cannot but conjecture a reference to Henry of Navarre, who mounted that throne precisely in 1589. The play has not, however, reached us in its earliest form; for the title-page of the quarto edition shows that it was revised and enlarged on the occasion of its performance before Elizabeth at Christmas 1597. There are not a few places in which we can trace the revision, the original form having been inadvertently retained along with the revised text. This is apparent in Biron's long speech in the fourth act, sc. 3:—

'For when would you, my lord, or you, or you,
Have found the ground of study's excellence
Without the beauty of a woman's face?
From women's eycs this doctrine I derive;
They are the ground, the books, the academes
From whence doth spring the true Promethean fire.'

This belongs to the older text. Farther on in the

speech, where we find the same ideas repeated in another and better form, we have evidently the revised version before us :—

'For when would you, my liege, or you, or you,
In leaden contemplation have found out
Such fiery numbers as the prompting eyes
Of beauty's tutors have enrich'd you with ?
• • • • •

From women's eyes this doctrine I derive :
They sparkle still the right Promethean fire,
They are the books, the arts, the academes,
That show, contain and nourish all the world :
Else none at all in ought proves excellent.'

The last two acts, which far surpass the earlier ones, have evidently been revised with special care, and some details, especially in the parts assigned to the Princess and Biron, now and then reveal Shakespeare's maturer style and tone of feeling.

No original source has been found for this first attempt of the young Stratfordian in the direction of comedy. For the first, and perhaps for the last time, he seems to have sought for no external stimulus, but set himself to evolve everything from within. The result is that, dramatically, the play is the slightest he ever wrote. It has scarcely ever been performed even in England, and may, indeed, be described as unactable.

II.

It is a play of two motives. The first, of course, is love—what else should be the theme of a youthful poet's first comedy?—but love without a trace of passion, almost without deep personal feeling, a love which is half make-believe, tricked out in word-plays. For the second theme of the comedy is language itself, poetic expression for its own sake—a subject round

which all the meditations of the young poet must necessarily have centred, as, in the midst of a cross-fire of new impressions, he set about the formation of a vocabulary and a style.

The moment the reader opens this first play of Shakespeare's, he cannot fail to observe that in several of his characters the poet is ridiculing absurdities and artificialities in the manner of speech of the day, and, moreover, that his personages, as a whole, display a certain half-sportive luxuriance in their rhetoric as well as in their wit and banter. They seem to be speaking, not in order to inform, persuade, or convince, but simply to relieve the pressure of their imagination, to play with words, to worry at them, split them up and recombine them, arrange them in alliterative sequences, or group them in almost identical antithetic clauses ; at the same time making sport no less fantastical with the ideas the words represent, and illustrating them by new and far-fetched comparisons ; until the dialogue appears not so much a part of the action or an introduction to it, as a tournament of words, clashing and swaying to and fro, while the rhythmic music of the verse and prose in turns expresses exhilaration, tenderness, affectation, the joy of life, gaiety or scorn. Although there is a certain superficiality about it all, we can recognise in it that exuberance of all the vital spirits which characterises the Renaissance. To the appeal—

‘ White-handed mistress, one sweet word with thee,’
comes the answer—

‘ Honey, and milk, and sugar : there are three.’

And well may Boyet say (v. 2)—

‘ The tongues of mocking wenches are as keen
As is the razor's edge invisible,

Cutting a smaller hair than may be seen,
Above the sense of sense ; so sensible
Seemeth their conference ; their conceits have wings
Fleeter than arrows, bullets, wind, thought, swifter things.'

Boyet's words, however, refer merely to the youthful gaiety and quickness of wit which may be found in all periods. We have here something more than that : the diction of the leading characters, and the various extravagances of expression cultivated by the subordinate personages, bring us face to face with a linguistic phenomenon which can be understood only in the light of history.

The word Euphuism is employed as a common designation for these eccentricities of style—a word which owes its origin to John Lyly's romance, *Euphues, the Anatomy of Wit*, published in 1578. Lyly was also the author of nine plays, all written before 1589, and there is no doubt that he exercised a very important influence upon Shakespeare's dramatic style.

But it is a very narrow view of the matter which finds in him the sole originator of the wave of mannerism which swept over the English poetry of the Renaissance.

The movement was general throughout Europe. It took its rise in the new-born enthusiasm for the antique literatures, in comparison with whose dignity of utterance the vernacular seemed low and vulgar. In order to approximate to the Latin models, men devised an exaggerated and dilated phraseology, heavy with images, and even sought to attain amplitude of style by placing side by side the vernacular word and the more exquisite foreign expression for the same object. Thus arose the *alto estilo*, the *estilo culto*. In Italy the disciples of Petrarch, with their *conceitti*, were dominant in poetry ; in Shakespeare's own time, Marini came to

the front with his antitheses and word-plays. In France, Ronsard and his school obeyed the general tendency. In Spain, the new style was represented by Guevara, who directly influenced Llyl.

Strictly speaking, it is not against Euphuism itself that Shakespeare's youthful satire is directed in *Love's Labour's Lost*. It is certain collateral forms of artificiality in style and utterance that are aimed at. In the first place, bombast, represented by the ridiculous Spaniard, Armado (the suggestion of the Invincible Armada in the name cannot be unintentional); in the next place, pedantry, embodied in the schoolmaster Holofernes, for whom tradition states that Florio, the teacher of languages and translator of Montaigne, served as a model—a supposition, however, which seems scarcely probable when we remember Florio's close connection with Shakespeare's patron, Southampton. Further, we find throughout the play the over-luxuriant and far-fetched method of expression, universally characteristic of the age, which Shakespeare himself had as yet by no means succeeded in shaking off. Only towards the close does he rise above it and satirise it. That is the intent of Biron's famous speech (v. 2)—

'Taffeta phrases, silken terms precise,
Three-piled hyperboles, spruce affectation,
Figures pedantical; these summer-flies
Have blown me full of maggot ostentation:
I do forswear them; and I here protest,
By this white glove,—how white the hand, God knows!—
Henceforth my wooing mind shall be express'd
In russet yeas and honest kersey noes.'

In the very first scene of the play the King describes Armado in too indulgent terms as—

'A refined traveller of Spain ;
A man in all the world's new fashion planted,
That hath a mint of phrases in his brain ;
One whom the music of his own vain tongue
Doth ravish like enchanting harmony.'

Holofernes the pedant, nearly a century and a half before Holberg's *Else Skolemesters*,¹ expresses himself very much as she does—

'HOLOFERNES. The posterior of the day, most generous sir, is liable, congruent, and measurable for the afternoon : the word is well cull'd, chose ; sweet and apt, I do assure you, sir ; I do assure.'

Armado's bombast may probably be accepted as a not too extravagant caricature of the bombast of the period. Certain it is that the schoolmaster Rombus, in Sir Philip Sidney's *Lady of the May*, addresses the Queen in a strain no whit less ridiculous than that of Holofernes. But what avails the justice of a parody if, in spite of the art and care lavished upon it, it remains as tedious as the mannerism it ridicules ! And this is unfortunately the case in the present instance. Shakespeare had not yet attained the maturity and detachment of mind which could enable him to rise high above the follies he attacks, and to sweep them aside with full authority. He buries himself in them, circumstantially demonstrates their absurdities, and is still too inexperienced to realise how he thereby inflicts upon the spectator and the reader the full burden of their tediousness. It is very characteristic of Elizabeth's taste that, even in 1598, she could still take pleasure in the play. All this fencing with words appealed to her quick intelligence ; while, with the unabashed sensuousness characteristic of the daughter

¹ The schoolmaster's wife in Ludvig Holberg's inimitable comedy. *Barselfstuen*.—TRANS.

of Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn, she found entertainment in the playwright's freedom of speech, even, no doubt, in the equivocal badinage between Boyet and Maria (iv. 1).

As was to be expected, Shakespeare is here more dependent on models than in his later works. From Lylly, the most popular comedy-writer of the day, he probably borrowed the idea of his Armado, who answers pretty closely to Sir Tophas in Lylly's *Endymion*, copied, in his turn, from Pyrgopolinices, the boastful soldier of the old Latin comedy. It is to be noted also that the braggart and pedant, the two comic figures of this play, are permanent types on the Italian stage, which in so many ways influenced the development of English comedy.

The personal element in this first sportive production is, however, not difficult to recognise : it is the young poet's mirthful protest against a life immured within the hard-and-fast rules of an artificial asceticism, such as the King of Navarre wishes to impose upon his little court, with its perpetual study, its vigils, its fasts, and its exclusion of womankind. Against this life of unnatural constraint the comedy pleads with the voice of Nature, especially through the mouth of Biron, in whose speeches, as Dowden has rightly remarked, we can not infrequently catch the accent of Shakespeare himself. In Biron and his Rosaline we have the first hesitating sketch of the masterly Benedick and Beatrice of *Much Ado About Nothing*. The best of Biron's speeches, those which are in unrhymed verse, we evidently owe to the revision of 1598 ; but they are conceived in the spirit of the original play, and merely express Shakespeare's design in stronger and clearer terms than he was at first able to compass.

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

FERDINAND, *king of Navarre.*

BIRON,

LONGAVILLE, } *lords attending on the king.*

DUMAIN,

BOYET, } *lords attending on the Princess of*
MERCADE, } *France.*

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO, *a fantastical Spaniard.*

SIR NATHANIEL, *a curate.*

HOLOFERNES, *a schoolmaster.*

DULL, *a constable.*

COSTARD, *a clown.*

MOTH, *page to Armado.*

A FORESTER.

THE PRINCESS OF FRANCE.

ROSALINE,

MARIA, } *ladies attending on the princess.*

KATHARINE,

JAQUENETTA, *a country wench.*

Lords, Attendants, etc.

Scene—Navarre.

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

The KING OF NAVARRE's park.

*Enter FERDINAND, KING OF NAVARRE, BIRON,
LONGAVILLE, and DUMAIN.*

KING. Let fame, that all hunt after in their lives,
Live register'd upon our brazen tombs
And then grace us in the disgrace of death ;
When, spite of cormorant devouring Time,
The endeavour of this present breath may buy
That honour which shall bate his scythe's keen edge
And make us heirs of all eternity.
Therefore, brave conquerors,—for so you are,
That war against your own affections
And the huge army of the world's desires,—
Our late edict shall strongly stand in force :
Navarre shall be the wonder of the world ;
Our court shall be a little Academe,
Still and contemplative in living art.
You three, Biron, Dumain, and Longaville,
Have sworn for three years' term to live with me
My fellow-scholars and to keep those statutes
That are recorded in this schedule here :
Your oaths are pass'd ; and now subscribe your
names,

That his own hand may strike his honour down
That violates the smallest branch herein :
If you are arm'd to do as sworn to do,
Subscribe to your deep oaths, and keep it too.

LONG. I am resolved ; 'tis but a three years' fast :
The mind shall banquet, though the body pine :
Fat paunches have lean pates, and dainty bits
Make rich the ribs, but bankrupt quite the wits.

DUM. My loving lord, Dumain is mortified :
The grosser manner of these world's delights
He throws upon the gross world's baser slaves :
To love, to wealth, to pomp, I pine and die ;
With all these living in philosophy.

BIRON. I can but say their protestation over ;
So much, dear liege, I have already sworn,
That is, to live and study here three years.
But there are other strict observances ;
As, not to see a woman in that term,
Which I hope well is not enrolled there ;
And one day in a week to touch no food
And but one meal on every day beside,
The which I hope is not enrolled there ;
And then, to sleep but three hours in the night,
And not be seen to wink of all the day—
When I was wont to think no harm all night
And make a dark night too of half the day—
Which I hope well is not enrolled there :
O, these are barren tasks, too hard to keep,
Not to see ladies, study, fast, not sleep !

KING. Your oath is pass'd to pass away from these.

BIRON. Let me say no, my liege, an if you please :

I only swore to study with your grace
And stay here in your court for three years' space.

LONG. You swore to that, Biron, and to the rest.

BIRON. By yea and nay, sir, then I swore in jest.
What is the end of study? let me know.

KING. Why, that to know, which else we should
not know.

BIRON. Things hid and barr'd, you mean, from
common sense?

KING. Ay, that is study's god-like recompense.

BIRON. Come on, then; I will swear to study so,
To know the thing I am forbid to know:
As thus,—to study where I well may dine,

When I to feast expressly am forbid;
Or study where to meet some mistress fine,

When mistresses from common sense are hid;
Or, having sworn too hard a keeping oath,
Study to break it and not break my troth.
If study's gain be thus and this be so,
Study knows that which yet it doth not know:
Swear me to this, and I will ne'er say no.

KING. These be the stops that hinder study
quite

And train our intellects to vain delight.

BIRON. Why, all delights are vain; but that
most vain,
Which with pain purchased doth inherit pain:
As, painfully, to pore upon a book

To seek the light of truth; while truth the while
Doth falsely blind the eyesight of his look:

Light seeking light doth light of light beguile:

So, ere you find where light in darkness lies,
Your light grows dark by losing of your eyes.
Study me how to please the eye indeed

By fixing it upon a fairer eye,
Who dazzling so, that eye shall be his heed
And give him light that it was blinded by.
Study is like the heaven's glorious sun
That will not be deep-search'd with saucy looks:
Small have continual plodders ever won
Save base authority from others' books.
These earthly godfathers of heaven's lights
That give a name to every fixed star
Have no more profit of their shining nights
Than those that walk and wot not what they are.
Too much to know is to know nought but fame;
And every godfather can give a name.

KING. How well he's read, to reason against
reading!

DUM. Proceeded well, to stop all good pro-
ceeding!

LONG. He weeds the corn and still lets grow
the weeding.

BIRON. The spring is near when green geese are
a-breeding.

DUM. How follows that?

BIRON. Fit in his place and time.

DUM. In reason nothing.

BIRON. Something then in rhyme.

KING. Biron is like an envious sneaping frost
That bites the first-born infants of the spring.

BIRON. Well, say I am ; why should proud summer
boast

Before the birds have any cause to sing ?
Why should I joy in any abortive birth ?
At Christmas I no more desire a rose
Than wish a snow in May's new-fangled mirth ;
But like of each thing that in season grows.
So you, to study now it is too late,
Climb o'er the house to unlock the little gate.

KING. Well, sit you out : go home, Biron : adieu.

BIRON. No, my good lord ; I have sworn to stay
with you :

And though I have for barbarism spoke more
Than for that angel knowledge you can say,
Yet confident I'll keep what I have swore

And bid the penance of each three years' day.
Give me the paper ; let me read the same ;
And to the strict'st decrees I'll write my name.

KING. How well this yielding rescues thee from
shame !

BIRON. [Reads] 'Item, That no woman shall
come within a mile of my court : ' Hath this been
proclaimed ?

LONG. Four days ago.

BIRON. Let's see the penalty. [Reads] 'On pain
of losing her tongue.' Who devised this penalty ?

LONG. Marry, that did I.

BIRON. Sweet lord, and why ?

LONG. To fright them hence with that dread
penalty.

BIRON. A dangerous law against gentility!

[Reads] 'Item, If any man be seen to talk with a woman within the term of three years, he shall endure such public shame as the rest of the court can possibly devise.'

This article, my liege, yourself must break;

For well you know here comes in embassy
The French king's daughter with yourself to
speak—

A maid of grace and complete majesty—
About surrender up of Aquitaine

To her decrepit, sick and bedrid father:
Therefore this article is made in vain,

Or vainly comes the admired princess hither.

KING. What say you, lords? why, this was quite
forgot.

BIRON. So study evermore is overshot:
While it doth study to have what it would
It doth forget to do the thing it should,
And when it hath the thing it hunteth most,
'Tis won as towns with fire, so won, so lost.

KING. We must of force dispense with this
decree;

She must lie here on mere necessity.

BIRON. Necessity will make us all forsworn
Three thousand times within this three years'
space;

For every man with his affects is born,

Not by might master'd but by special grace:
If I break faith, this word shall speak for me;
I am forsworn on 'mere necessity.'

So to the laws at large I write my name :

[*Subscribes.*

And he that breaks them in the least degree
Stands in attainder of eternal shame :

Suggestions are to other as to me ;
But I believe, although I seem so loath,
I am the last that will last keep his oath.
But is there no quick recreation granted ?

KING. Ay, that there is. Our court, you know,
is haunted

With a refined traveller of Spain ;
A man in all the world's new fashion planted,
That hath a mint of phrases in his brain ;
One whom the music of his own vain tongue
Doth ravish like enchanting harmony ;
A man of complements, whom right and wrong
Have chose as umpire of their mutiny :

This child of fancy that Armado hight
For interim to our studies shall relate
In high-born words the worth of many a knight
From tawny Spain lost in the world's debate.
How you delight, my lords, I know not, I ;
But, I protest, I love to hear him lie
And I will use him for my minstrelsy.

BIRON. Armado is a most illustrious wight,
A man of fire-new words, fashion's own knight.

LONG. Costard the swain and he shall be oursport ;
And so to study, three years is but short.

Enter DULL with a letter, and COSTARD.

DULL. Which is the duke's own person ?

BIRON. This fellow : what wouldest ?

DULL. I myself reprehend his own person, for I am his grace's tharborough: but I would see his own person in flesh and blood.

BIRON. This is he.

DULL. Signior Arme—Arme—commends you. There's villany abroad: this letter will tell you more.

Cost. Sir, the contempts thereof are as touching me.

KING. A letter from the magnificent Armado.

BIRON. How low soever the matter, I hope in God for high words.

LONG. A high hope for a low heaven: God grant us patience!

BIRON. To hear? or forbear laughing?

LONG. To hear meekly, sir, and to laugh moderately; or to forbear both.

BIRON. Well, sir, be it as the style shall give us cause to climb in the merriness.

Cost. The matter is to me, sir, as concerning Jaquenetta. The manner of it is, I was taken with the manner.

BIRON. In what manner?

Cost. In manner and form following, sir; all those three: I was seen with her in the manor-house, sitting with her upon the form, and taken following her into the park; which, put together, is in manner and form following. Now, sir, for the manner,—it is the manner of a man to speak to a woman: for the form,—in some form.

BIRON. For the following, sir?

Cost. As it shall follow in my correction: and God defend the right!

KING. Will you hear this letter with attention?

BIRON. As we would hear an oracle.

Cost. Such is the simplicity of man to hearken after the flesh.

KING. [Reads] 'Great deputy, the welkin's vice-gerent and sole dominator of Navarre, my soul's earth's god, and body's fostering patron.'

Cost. Not a word of Costard yet.

KING. [Reads] 'So it is,'—

Cost. It may be so: but if he say it is so, he is, in telling true, but so.

KING. Peace!

Cost. Be to me and every man that dares not fight!

KING. No words!

Cost. Of other men's secrets, I beseech you.

KING. [Reads] 'So it is, besieged with sable-coloured melancholy, I did commend the black-oppressing humour to the most wholesome physic of thy health-giving air; and, as I am a gentleman, betook myself to walk. The time when. About the sixth hour; when beasts most graze, birds best peck, and men sit down to that nourishment which is called supper: so much for the time when. Now for the ground which; which, I mean, I walked upon: it is ycleped thy park. Then for the place where; where, I mean, I did encounter that obscene and most preposterous event, that draweth from my snow-white pen the ebon-coloured ink, which here thou viewest, beholdest, surveyest, or seest: but

to the place where; it standeth north-north-east and by east from the west corner of thy curious-knotted garden: there did I see that low-spirited swain, that base minnow of thy mirth,'—

Cost. Me?

KING. [Reads] that unlettered small-knowing

Cost. Me? [soul,'—

KING. [Reads] 'that shallow vassal,'—

Cost. Still me?

KING. [Reads] 'which, as I remember, hight

Cost. O, me! [Costard,'—

KING. [Reads] 'sorted and consorted, contrary to thy established proclaimed edict and continent canon, which with,—O, with—but with this I passion to say wherewith,—

Cost. With a wench.

KING. [Reads] 'with a child of our grandmother Eve, a female; or, for thy more sweet understanding, a woman. Him I, as my ever-esteemed duty pricks me on, have sent to thee, to receive the meed of punishment, by thy sweet grace's officer, Anthony Dull; a man of good repute, carriage, bearing, and estimation.'

DULL. Me, an't shall please you; I am Anthony Dull.

KING. [Reads] 'For Jaquenetta,—so is the weaker vessel called which I apprehended with the aforesaid swain,—I keep her as a vessel of thy law's fury; and shall, at the least of thy sweet notice, bring her to trial. Thine, in all compliments of devoted and heart-burning heat of duty,

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO.'

BIRON. This is not so well as I looked for, but the best that ever I heard.

KING. Ay, the best for the worst. But, sirrah, what say you to this?

Cost. Sir, I confess the wench.

KING. Did you hear the proclamation?

Cost. I do confess much of the hearing it, but little of the marking of it.

KING. It was proclaimed a year's imprisonment, to be taken with a wench.

Cost. I was taken with none, sir: I was taken with a damsel.

KING. Well, it was proclaimed 'damsel.'

Cost. This was no damsel neither, sir; she was a virgin.

KING. It is so varied too; for it was proclaimed 'virgin.'

Cost. If it were, I deny her virginity: I was taken with a maid.

KING. This maid will not serve your turn, sir.

Cost. This maid will serve my turn, sir.

KING. Sir, I will pronounce your sentence: you shall fast a week with bran and water.

Cost. I had rather pray a month with mutton and porridge.

KING. And Don Armado shall be your keeper.
My Lord Biron, see him deliver'd o'er:
And go we, lords, to put in practice that
Which each to other hath so strongly sworn.

[*Exeunt KING, LONGAVILLE, and DUMAIN.*

BIRON. I'll lay my head to any good man's hat,
These oaths and laws will prove an idle scorn.
Sirrah, come on.

COST. I suffer for the truth, sir; for true it is, I
was taken with Jaquenetta, and Jaquenetta is a
true girl; and therefore welcome the sour cup of
prosperity! Affliction may one day smile again;
and till then, sit thee down, sorrow! [Exeunt,

SCENE II.

The same.

Enter ARMADO and MOTH.

ARM. Boy, what sign is it when a man of great
spirit grows melancholy?

MOTH. A great sign, sir, that he will look sad.

ARM. Why, sadness is one and the self-same
thing, dear imp.

MOTH. No, no; O Lord, sir, no.

ARM. How canst thou part sadness and melan-
choly, my tender juvenal?

MOTH. By a familiar demonstration of the
working, my tough senior.

ARM. Why tough senior? why tough senior?

MOTH. Why tender juvenal? why tender juvenal?

ARM. I spoke it, tender juvenal, as a congruent
epitheton appertaining to thy young days, which
we may nominate tender.

MOTH. And I, tough senior, as an appertinent
title to your old time, which we may name tough.

ARM. Pretty and apt.

MOTH. How mean you, sir? I pretty, and my saying apt? or I apt, and my saying pretty?

ARM. Thou pretty, because little.

MOTH. Little pretty, because little. Wherefore apt?

ARM. And therefore apt, because quick.

MOTH. Speak you this in my praise, master?

ARM. In thy condign praise.

MOTH. I will praise an eel with the same praise.

ARM. What, that an eel is ingenious?

MOTH. That an eel is quick.

ARM. I do say thou art quick in answers: thou heatest my blood.

MOTH. I am answered, sir.

ARM. I love not to be crossed.

MOTH. [Aside] He speaks the mere contrary; crosses love not him.

ARM. I have promised to study three years with the duke.

MOTH. You may do it in an hour, sir.

ARM. Impossible.

MOTH. How many is one thrice told?

ARM. I am ill at reckoning; it fitteth the spirit of a tapster.

MOTH. You are a gentleman and a gamester, sir.

ARM. I confess both: they are both the varnish of a complete man.

MOTH. Then, I am sure, you know how much the gross sum of deuce-ace amounts to.

ARM. It doth amount to one more than two.

MOTH. Which the base vulgar do call three.

ARM. True.

MOTH. Why, sir, is this such a piece of study? Now here is three studied, ere ye'll thrice wink: and how easy it is to put 'years' to the word 'three,' and study three years in two words, the dancing horse will tell you.

ARM. A most fine figure!

MOTH. To prove you a cipher.

ARM. I will hereupon confess I am in love: and as it is base for a soldier to love, so am I in love with a base wench. If drawing my sword against the humour of affection would deliver me from the reprobate thought of it, I would take Desire prisoner, and ransom him to any French courtier for a new-devised courtesy. I think scorn to sigh: methinks I should outswear Cupid. Comfort me, boy: what great men have been in love?

MOTH. Hercules, master.

ARM. Most sweet Hercules! More authority, dear boy, name more; and, sweet my child, let them be men of good repute and carriage.

MOTH. Samson, master: he was a man of good carriage, great carriage, for he carried the town-gates on his back like a porter: and he was in love.

ARM. O well-knit Samson! strong-jointed Samson! I do excel thee in my rapier as much as thou didst me in carrying gates. I am in love too. Who was Samson's love, my dear Moth?

MOTH. A woman, master.

ARM. Of what complexion?

MOTH. Of all the four, or the three, or the two, or one of the four.

ARM. Tell me precisely of what complexion.

MOTH. Of the sea-water green, sir.

ARM. Is that one of the four complexions?

MOTH. As I have read, sir; and the best of them too.

ARM. Green indeed is the colour of lovers; but to have a love of that colour, methinks Samson had small reason for it. He surely affected her for her wit.

MOTH. It was so, sir; for she had a green wit.

ARM. My love is most immaculate white and red.

MOTH. Most maculate thoughts, master, are masked under such colours.

ARM. Define, define, well-educated infant.

MOTH. My father's wit and my mother's tongue, assist me!

ARM. Sweet invocation of a child; most pretty and pathetical!

MOTH. If she be made of white and red,

Her faults will ne'er be known,

For blushing cheeks by faults are bred

And fears by pale white shown:

Then if she fear, or be to blame,

By this you shall not know,

For still her cheeks possess the same

Which native she doth owe.

A dangerous rhyme, master, against the reason of white and red.

ARM. Is there not a ballad, boy, of the King and the Beggar?

MOTH. The world was very guilty of such a ballad some three ages since: but I think now 'tis not to be found; or, if it were, it would neither serve for the writing nor the tune.

ARM. I will have that subject newly writ o'er, that I may example my digression by some mighty precedent. Boy, I do love that country girl that I took in the park with the rational hind Costard: she deserves well.

MOTH. [Aside] To be whipped; and yet a better love than my master.

ARM. Sing, boy; my spirit grows heavy in love.

MOTH. And that's great marvel, loving a light wench.

ARM. I say, sing.

MOTH. Forbear till this company be past.

Enter DULL, COSTARD, and JAQUENETTA.

DULL. Sir, the duke's pleasure is, that you keep Costard safe: and you must suffer him to take no delight nor no penance; but a' must fast three days a week. For this damsel, I must keep her at the park: she is allowed for the day-woman. Fare you well.

ARM. I do betray myself with blushing. Maid!

JAQ. Man?

ARM. I will visit thee at the lodge.

JAQ. That's hereby.

ARM. I know where it is situate.

JAQ. Lord, how wise you are !

ARM. I will tell thee wonders.

JAQ. With that face ?

ARM. I love thee.

JAQ. So I heard you say.

ARM. And so, farewell.

JAQ. Fair weather after you !

DULL. Come, Jaquenetta, away !

[*Exeunt DULL and JAQUENETTA.*

ARM. Villain, thou shalt fast for thy offences
ere thou be pardoned.

COST. Well, sir, I hope, when I do it, I shall do
it on a full stomach.

ARM. Thou shalt be heavily punished.

COST. I am more bound to you than your fellows,
for they are but lightly rewarded.

ARM. Take away this villain ; shut him up.

MOTH. Come, you transgressing slave ; away !

COST. Let me not be pent up, sir : I will fast,
being loose.

MOTH. No, sir ; that were fast and loose : thou
shalt to prison.

COST. Well, if ever I do see the merry days of
desolation that I have seen, some shall see.

MOTH. What shall some see ?

COST. Nay, nothing, Master Moth, but what
they look upon. It is not for prisoners to be too
silent in their words ; and therefore I will say

nothing: I thank God I have as little patience as another man; and therefore I can be quiet.

[*Exeunt* MOTH and COSTARD.]

ARM. I do affect the very ground, which is base, where her shoe, which is baser, guided by her foot, which is basest, doth tread. I shall be forsworn, which is a great argument of falsehood, if I love. And how can that be true love which is falsely attempted? Love is a familiar; Love is a devil: there is no evil angel but Love. Yet was Samson so tempted, and he had an excellent strength; yet was Solomon so seduced, and he had a very good wit. Cupid's butt-shaft is too hard for Hercules' club; and therefore too much odds for a Spaniard's rapier. The first and second cause will not serve my turn; the passado he respects not, the duello he regards not: his disgrace is to be called boy; but his glory is to subdue men. Adieu, valour! rust, rapier! be still, drum! for your manager is in love, yea, he loveth. Assist me, some extemporal god of rhyme, for I am sure I shall turn sonnet. Devise, wit; write, pen; for I am for whole volumes in folio.

[*Exit.*]

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

The same.

Enter the PRINCESS of France, ROSALINE, MARIA, KATHARINE, BOYET, Lords, and other Attendants.

BOYET. Now, madam, summon up your dearest spirits :

Consider who the king your father sends,
To whom he sends, and what's his embassy :
Yourself, held precious in the world's esteem,
To parley with the sole inheritor
Of all perfections that a man may owe,
Matchless Navarre ; the plea of no less weight
Than Aquitaine, a dowry for a queen.
Be now as prodigal of all dear grace
As Nature was in making graces dear
When she did starve the general world beside
And prodigally gave them all to you.

PRIN. Good Lord Boyet, my beauty, though but mean,
Needs not the painted flourish of your praise :
Beauty is bought by judgement of the eye,
Not utter'd by base sale of chapmen's tongues :
I am less proud to hear you tell my worth
Than you much willing to be counted wise
In spending your wit in the praise of mine.

But now to task the tasker: good Boyet,
You are not ignorant, all-telling fame
Doth noise abroad, Navarre hath made a vow,
Till painful study shall outwear three years,
No woman may approach his silent court:
Therefore to 's seemeth it a needful course,
Before we enter his forbidden gates,
To know his pleasure; and in that behalf,
Bold of your worthiness, we single you
As our best-moving fair solicitor.
Tell him, the daughter of the King of France,
On serious business, craving quick dispatch,
Importunes personal conference with his grace:
Haste, signify so much; while we attend,
Like humble-visaged suitors, his high will.

BOYET. Proud of employment, willingly I go.

PRIN. All pride is willing pride, and yours is so.

[*Exit Boyet.*]

Who are the votaries, my loving lords,
That are vow-fellows with this virtuous duke?

FIRST LORD. Lord Longaville is one.

PRIN. Know you the man?

MAR. I know him, madam: at a marriage-feast,
Between Lord Perigort and the beauteous heir
Of Jaques Falconbridge, solemnized
In Normandy, saw I this Longaville:
A man of sovereign parts he is esteem'd;
Well fitted in arts, glorious in arms:
Nothing becomes him ill that he would well.
The only soil of his fair virtue's gloss,

If virtue's gloss will stain with any soil,
Is a sharp wit match'd with too blunt a will ;
Whose edge hath power to cut, whose will still wills
It should none spare that come within his power.

PRIN. Some merry mocking lord, belike; is't so?

MAR. They say so most that most his humours
know.

PRIN. Such short-lived wits do wither as they
grow.

Who are the rest?

KATH. The young Dumain, a well-accomplished
youth,

Of all that virtue love for virtue loved :
Most power to do most harm, least knowing ill ;
For he hath wit to make an ill shape good,
And shape to win grace though he had no wit.
I saw him at the Duke Alençon's once ;
And much too little of that good I saw
Is my report to his great worthiness.

Ros. Another of these students at that time
Was there with him, if I have heard a truth.

Biron they call him ; but a merrier man,
Within the limit of becoming mirth,
I never spent an hour's talk withal :
His eye begets occasion for his wit ;
For every object that the one doth catch
The other turns to a mirth-moving jest,
Which his fair tongue, conceit's expositor,
Delivers in such apt and gracious words
That aged ears play truant at his tales

And younger hearings are quite ravished;
So sweet and voluble is his discourse.

PRIN. God bless my ladies! are they all in love,
That every one her own hath garnished
With such bedecking ornaments of praise?

FIRST LORD. Here comes Boyet.

Re-enter BOYET.

PRIN. Now, what admittance, lord?

BOYET. Navarre had notice of your fair approach;
And he and his competitors in oath
Were all address'd to meet you, gentle lady,
Before I came. Marry, thus much I have learnt:
He rather means to lodge you in the field,
Like one that comes here to besiege his court,
Than seek a dispensation for his oath,
To let you enter his unpeopled house.
Here comes Navarre.

*Enter KING, LONGAVILLE, DUMAIN, BIRON,
and Attendants.*

KING. Fair princess, welcome to the court of
Navarre.

PRIN. 'Fair' I give you back again; and 'welcome'
I have not yet: the roof of this court is too
high to be yours; and welcome to the wide fields
too base to be mine.

KING. You shall be welcome, madam, to my court.

PRIN. I will be welcome, then: conduct me thither.

KING. Hear me, dear lady; I have sworn an oath.

PRIN. Our Lady help my lord! he'll be forsown.

KING. Not for the world, fair madam, by my will.

PRIN. Why, will shall break it; will and nothing else.

KING. Your ladyship is ignorant what it is.

PRIN. Were my lord so, his ignorance were wise, Where now his knowledge must prove ignorance. I hear your grace hath sworn out house-keeping: 'Tis deadly sin to keep that oath, my lord, And sin to break it.

But pardon me, I am too sudden-bold:

To teach a teacher ill beseemeth me.

Vouchsafe to read the purpose of my coming, And suddenly resolve me in my suit.

KING. Madam, I will, if suddenly I may.

PRIN. You will the sooner, that I were away; For you'll prove perjured if you make me stay.

BIRON. Did not I dance with you in Brabant once?

Ros. Did not I dance with you in Brabant once?

BIRON. I know you did.

Ros. How needless was it then to ask the question!

BIRON. You must not be so quick.

Ros. 'Tis long of you that spur me with such questions.

BIRON. Your wit's too hot, it speeds too fast, 'twill tire.

Ros. Not till it leave the rider in the mire.

BIRON. What time o' day?

Ros. The hour that fools should ask.

BIRON. Now fair befall your mask!

Ros. Fair fall the face it covers !

BIRON. And send you many lovers !

Ros. Amen, so you be none.

BIRON. Nay, then will I be gone.

KING. Madam, your father here doth intimate
The payment of a hundred thousand crowns ;
Being but the one half of an entire sum
Disbursed by my father in his wars.
But say that he or we, as neither have,
Received that sum, yet there remains unpaid
A hundred thousand more ; in surety of the which,
One part of Aquitaine is bound to us,
Although not valued to the money's worth.
If then the king your father will restore
But that one half which is unsatisfied,
We will give up our right in Aquitaine,
And hold fair friendship with his majesty.
But that, it seems, he little purposeth,
For here he doth demand to have repaid
A hundred thousand crowns ; and not demands,
On payment of a hundred thousand crowns,
To have his title live in Aquitaine ;
Which we much rather had depart withal
And have the money by our father lent
Than Aquitaine so gelded as it is.
Dear princess, were not his requests so far
From reason's yielding, your fair self should make
A yielding 'gainst some reason in my breast
And go well satisfied to France again.

PRIN. You do the king my father too much wrong
And wrong the reputation of your name,

In so unseeming to confess receipt
Of that which hath so faithfully been paid.

KING. I do protest I never heard of it;
And if you prove it, I'll repay it back
Or yield up Aquitaine.

PRIN. We arrest your word.
Boyet, you can produce acquittances
For such a sum from special officers
Of Charles his father.

KING. Satisfy me so.
BOYET. So please your grace, the packet is not
come

Where that and other specialties are bound:
To-morrow you shall have a sight of them.

KING. It shall suffice me: at which interview
All liberal reason I will yield unto.
Meantime receive such welcome at my hand
As honour without breach of honour may
Make tender of to thy true worthiness:
You may not come, fair princess, in my gates;
But here without you shall be so received
As you shall deem yourself lodged in my heart,
Though so denied fair harbour in my house.
Your own good thoughts excuse me, and farewell;
To-morrow shall we visit you again.

PRIN. Sweet health and fair desires consort
your grace!

KING. Thy own wish wish I thee in every place!
[Exit.

BIRON. Lady, I will commend you to mine own
heart.

Ros. Pray you, do my commendations; I would be glad to see it.

BIRON. I would you heard it groan.

Ros. Is the fool sick?

BIRON. Sick at the heart.

Ros. Alack, let it blood.

BIRON. Would that do it good?

Ros. My physic says 'ay.'

BIRON. Will you prick 't with your eye?

Ros. No point, with my knife.

BIRON. Now, God save thy life!

Ros. And yours from long living!

BIRON. I cannot stay thanksgiving. [Retiring.

DUM. Sir, I pray you, a word: what lady is that same?

BOYET. The heir of Alençon, Katharine her name.

DUM. A gallant lady. Monsieur, fare you well.

[Exit.

LONG. I beseech you a word: what is she in the white?

BOYET. A woman sometimes, an you saw her in the light.

LONG. Perchance light in the light. I desire her name.

BOYET. She hath but one for herself; to desire that were a shame.

LONG. Pray you, sir, whose daughter?

BOYET. Her mother's, I have heard.

LONG. God's blessing on your beard!

BOYET. Good sir, be not offended.

She is an heir of Falconbridge.

LONG. Nay, my choler is ended.
She is a most sweet lady.

BOVET. Not unlike, sir, that may be. [*Exit* LONG.]

BIRON. What's her name in the cap?

BOVET. Rosaline, by good hap.

BIRON. Is she wedded or no?

BOVET. To her will, sir, or so.

BIRON. You are welcome, sir: adieu.

BOVET. Farewell to me, sir, and welcome to
you. [*Exit* BIRON.]

MAR. That last is Biron, the merry mad-cap lord:
Not a word with him but a jest.

BOVET. And every jest but a word.

PRIN. It was well done of you to take him at
his word.

BOVET. I was as willing to grapple as he was to
board.

MAR. Two hot sheeps, marry.

BOVET. And wherefore not ships?
No sheep, sweet lamb, unless we feed on your lips.

MAR. You sheep, and I pasture: shall that finish
the jest?

BOVET. So you grant pasture for me.

[*Offering to kiss her.*

MAR. Not so, gentle beast:
My lips are no common, though several they be.

BOVET. Belonging to whom?

MAR. To my fortunes and me.

PRIN. Good wits will be jangling; but, gentles,
agree:

This civil war of wits were much better used

On Navarre and his book-men ; for here 'tis abused.

BOYET. If my observation, which very seldom lies,
By the heart's still rhetoric disclosed with eyes,
Deceive me not now, Navarre is infected.

PRIN. With what?

BOYET. With that which we lovers entitle
affected.

PRIN. Your reason?

BOYET. Why, all his behaviours did make their
retire

To the court of his eye, peeping thorough desire :
His heart, like an agate, with your print impress'd,
Proud with his form, in his eye pride express'd :
His tongue, all impatient to speak and not see,
Did stumble with haste in his eyesight to be ;
All senses to that sense did make their repair,
To feel only looking on fairest of fair :
Methought all his senses were lock'd in his eye,
As jewels in crystal for some prince to buy ;
Who, tendering their own worth from where they
were glass'd,

Did point you to buy them, along as you pass'd :
His face's own margent did quote such amazes
That all eyes saw his eyes enchanted with gazes.
I'll give you Aquitaine and all that is his,
An you give him for my sake but one loving kiss.

PRIN. Come to our pavilion : Boyet is disposed.

BOYET. But to speak that in words which his
eye hath disclosed.

I only have made a mouth of his eye,

By adding a tongue which I know will not lie.

Ros. Thou art an old love-monger and speakest skilfully.

MAR. He is Cupid's grandfather and learns news of him.

Ros. Then was Venus like her mother, for her father is but grim.

BOVET. Do you hear, my mad wenches?

MAR. No.

BOVET. What then, do you see?

Ros. Ay, our way to be gone.

BOVET. You are too hard for me.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

The same.

Enter ARMADO and MOTH.

ARM. Warble, child; make passionate my sense of hearing.

MOTH. *Concolinel.* [Singing.

ARM. Sweet air! Go, tenderness of years; take this key, give enlargement to the swain, bring him festinately hither: I must employ him in a letter to my love.

MOTH. Master, will you win your love with a French brawl?

ARM. How meanest thou? brawling in French?

MOTH. No, my complete master: but to jig off a tune at the tongue's end, canary to it with your feet, humour it with turning up your eyelids, sigh a note and sing a note, sometime through the throat, as if you swallowed love with singing love, sometime through the nose, as if you snuffed up love by smelling love; with your hat penthouse-like o'er the shop of your eyes; with your arms crossed on your thin-belly doublet like a rabbit on a spit; or your hands in your pocket like a man after the old painting; and keep not too long in one tune, but a snip and away. These are complements, these are humours; these betray nice wenches, that would be betrayed without these; and make them men of note—do you note me?—that most are affected to these.

ARM. How hast thou purchased this experience?

MOTH. By my penny of observation.

ARM. But O,—but O,—

MOTH. 'The hobby-horse is forgot.'

ARM. Callest thou my love 'hobby-horse'?

MOTH. No, master; the hobby-horse is but a colt, and your love perhaps a hackney. But have you forgot your love?

ARM. Almost I had.

MOTH. Negligent student! learn her by heart.

ARM. By heart and in heart, boy.

MOTH. And out of heart, master: all those three I will prove.

ARM. What wilt thou prove?

MOTH. A man, if I live; and this, by, in, and without, upon the instant: by heart you love her,

because your heart cannot come by her ; in heart you love her, because your heart is in love with her ; and out of heart you love her, being out of heart that you cannot enjoy her.

ARM. I am all these three.

MOTH. And three times as much more, and yet nothing at all.

ARM. Fetch hither the swain : he must carry me a letter.

MOTH. A message well sympathized ; a horse to be ambassador for an ass.

ARM. Ha, ha ! what sayest thou ?

MOTH. Marry, sir, you must send the ass upon the horse, for he is very slow-gaited. But I go.

ARM. The way is but short : away !

MOTH. As swift as lead, sir.

ARM. The meaning, pretty ingenious ?

Is not lead a metal heavy, dull, and slow ?

MOTH. Minimè, honest master ; or rather,

ARM. I say lead is slow. [master, no.

MOTH. You are too swift, sir, to say so : Is that lead slow which is fired from a gun ?

ARM. Sweet smoke of rhetoric !

He reputes me a cannon ; and the bullet, that's he : I shoot thee at the swain.

MOTH. Thump then and I flee. [Exit.

ARM. A most acute juvenal ; volable and free of grace !

By thy favour, sweet welkin, I must sigh in thy face : Most rude melancholy, valour gives thee place. My herald is return'd.

Re-enter Moth with Costard.

MOTH. A wonder, master! here's a costard
broken in a shin.

ARM. Some enigma, some riddle: come, thy
l'envoy; begin.

Cost. No egma, no riddle, no l'envoy; no salve
in the mail, sir: O, sir, plantain, a plain plantain!
no l'envoy, no l'envoy; no salve, sir, but a plantain!

ARM. By virtue, thou enforcest laughter; thy
silly thought my spleen; the heaving of my lungs
provokes me to ridiculous smiling. O, pardon me,
my stars! Doth the inconsiderate take salve for
l'envoy, and the word l'envoy for a salve?

MOTH. Do the wise think them other? is not
l'envoy a salve?

ARM. No, page: it is an epilogue or discourse,
to make plain

Some obscure precedence that hath tofore been sain.
I will example it:

The fox, the ape and the humble-bee,
Were still at odds, being but three.

There's the moral. Now the l'envoy.

MOTH. I will add the l'envoy. Say the moral again.

ARM. The fox, the ape, the humble-bee,
Were still at odds, being but three.

MOTH. Until the goose came out of door,
And stay'd the odds by adding four.

Now will I begin your moral, and do you follow
with my l'envoy.

The fox, the ape and the humble-bee,
Were still at odds, being but three.

ARM. Until the goose came out of door,
Staying the odds by adding four.

MOTH. A good l'envoy, ending in the goose :
would you desire more ?

COST. The boy hath sold him a bargain, a goose,
that's flat.

Sir, your pennyworth is good, an your goose be
fat.

To sell a bargain well is as cunning as fast and
loose :

Let me see ; a fat l'envoy ; ay, that's a fat goose.

ARM. Come hither, come hither. How did this
argument begin ?

MOTH. By saying that a costard was broken in
a shin.

Then call'd you for the l'envoy.

COST. True, and I for a plantain : thus came
your argument in ;

Then the boy's fat l'envoy, the goose that you
bought ;

And he ended the market.

ARM. But tell me ; how was there a costard
broken in a shin ?

MOTH. I will tell you sensibly.

COST. Thou hast no feeling of it, Moth : I will
speak that l'envoy :

I Costard, running out, that was safely within,
Fell over the threshold, and broke my shin.

ARM. We will talk no more of this matter.

COST. Till there be more matter in the shin.

ARM. Sirrah Costard, I will enfranchise thee.

COST. O, marry me to one Frances: I smell some l'envoy, some goose, in this.

ARM. By my sweet soul, I mean setting thee at liberty, enfreedoming thy person: thou wert immured, restrained, captivated, bound.

COST. True, true; and now you will be my purgation and let me loose.

ARM. I give thee thy liberty, set thee from durance; and, in lieu thereof, impose on thee nothing but this: bear this significant [*giving a letter*] to the country maid Jaquenetta: there is remuneration; for the best ward of mine honour is rewarding my dependants. Moth, follow. [*Exit.*

MOTH. Like the sequel, I. Signior Costard, adieu.

COST. My sweet ounce of man's flesh! my incony Jew! [*Exit Moth.*

Now will I look to his remuneration. Remuneration! O, that's the Latin word for three farthings: three farthings—remuneration.—‘What's the price of this inkle?’—‘One penny.’—‘No, I'll give you a remuneration:’ why, it carries it. Remuneration! why, it is a fairer name than French crown. I will never buy and sell out of this word.

Enter BIRON.

BIRON. O, my good knave Costard! exceedingly well met.

COST. Pray you, sir, how much carnation ribbon may a man buy for a remuneration?

BIRON. What is a remuneration?

COST. Marry, sir, halfpenny farthing.

BIRON. Why, then, three-farthing worth of silk.
COST. I thank your worship: God be wi' you!

BIRON. Stay, slave; I must employ thee:
As thou wilt win my favour, good my knave,
Do one thing for me that I shall entreat.

COST. When would you have it done, sir?

BIRON. This afternoon.

COST. Well, I will do it, sir: fare you well.

BIRON. Thou knowest not what it is.

COST. I shall know, sir, when I have done it.

BIRON. Why, villain, thou must know first.

COST. I will come to your worship to-morrow morning.

BIRON. It must be done this afternoon. Hark, slave, it is but this:

The princess comes to hunt here in the park,
And in her train there is a gentle lady;
When tongues speak sweetly, then they name her name,

And Rosaline they call her: ask for her;
And to her white hand see thou do commend
This seal'd-up counsel. There's thy guerdon; go.

[Giving him a shilling.

COST. Gardon, O sweet gardon! better than remuneration, a 'leven-pence farthing better: most sweet gardon! I will do it, sir, in print. Gardon!
Remuneration! [Exit.

BIRON. And I, forsooth, in love! I, that have been love's whip;
A very beadle to a humorous sigh;
A critic, nay, a night-watch constable;

A domineering pedant o'er the boy ;
Than whom no mortal so magnificent !
This whimpled, whining, purblind, wayward boy ;
This senior-junior, giant-dwarf, Dan Cupid ;
Regent of love-rhymes, lord of folded arms,
The anointed sovereign of sighs and groans,
Liege of all loiterers and malcontents,
Dread prince of placketts, king of codpieces,
Sole imperator and great general
Of trotting 'paritors :—O my little heart !—
And I to be a corporal of his field,
And wear his colours like a tumbler's hoop !
What, I ! I love ! I sue ! I seek a wife !
A woman, that is like a German clock,
Still a-repairing, ever out of frame,
And never going aright, being a watch,
But being watch'd that it may still go right !
Nay, to be perjured, which is worst of all ;
And, among three, to love the worst of all ;
A wightly wanton with a velvet brow,
With two pitch-balls stuck in her face for eyes ;
Ay, and, by heaven, one that will do the deed
Though Argus were her eunuch and her guard :
And I to sigh for her ! to watch for her !
To pray for her ! Go to ; it is a plague
That Cupid will impose for my neglect
Of his almighty dreadful little might.
Well, I will love, write, sigh, pray, sue and groan
Some men must love my lady and some Joan.

[*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

The same.

*Enter the PRINCESS, and her train, a Forester, BOYET,
ROSALINE, MARIA, and KATHARINE.*

PRIN. Was that the king, that spurred his horse
so hard

Against the steep uprising of the hill?

BOYET. I know not; but I think it was not he.

PRIN. Who'e'er a' was, a' show'd a mounting
mind.

Well, lords, to-day we shall have our dispatch:
On Saturday we will return to France.

Then, forester, my friend, where is the bush
That we must stand and play the murderer in?

FOR. Hereby, upon the edge of yonder coppice;
A stand where you may make the fairest shoot.

PRIN. I thank my beauty, I am fair that shoot,
And thereupon thou speak'st the fairest shoot.

FOR. Pardon me, madam, for I meant not so.

PRIN. What, what? first praise me and again
say no?

O short-lived pride! Not fair? alack for woe!

FOR. Yes, madam, fair.

PRIN. Nay, never paint me now:
Where fair is not, praise cannot mend the brow.
Here, good my glass, take this for telling true:
Fair payment for foul words is more than due.

FOR. Nothing but fair is that which you inherit.

PRIN. See, see, my beauty will be saved by merit!
O heresy in fair, fit for these days!

A giving hand, though foul, shall have fair praise.
But come, the bow: now mercy goes to kill,
And shooting well is then accounted ill.

Thus will I save my credit in the shoot:
Not wounding, pity would not let me do 't;
If wounding, then it was to show my skill,
That more for praise than purpose meant to kill.
And out of question so it is sometimes,
Glory grows guilty of detested crimes,
When, for fame's sake, for praise, an outward
part,

We bend to that the working of the heart;
As I for praise alone now seek to spill
The poor deer's blood, that my heart means no ill.

BOVET. Do not curst wives hold that self-
sovereignty
Only for praise sake, when they strive to be
Lords o'er their lords?

PRIN. Only for praise: and praise we may afford
To any lady that subdues a lord.

BOVET. Here comes a member of the common-
wealth.

Enter COSTARD.

COST. God dig-you-den-all! Pray you, which is
the head lady?

PRIN. Thou shalt know her, fellow, by the rest
that have no heads.

COST. Which is the greatest lady, the highest?

PRIN. The thickest and the tallest.

COST. The thickest and the tallest! it is so;
truth is truth.

An your waist, mistress, were as slender as
my wit,

One o' these maids' girdles for your waist should
be fit.

Are not you the chief woman? you are the
thickest here.

PRIN. What's your will, sir? what's your will?

COST. I have a letter from Monsieur Biron to
one Lady Rosaline.

PRIN. O, thy letter, thy letter! he's a good
friend of mine:

Stand aside, good bearer. Boyet, you can carve;
Break up this capon.

BOYET. I am bound to serve.

This letter is mistook, it importeth none here;
It is writ to Jaquenetta.

PRIN. We will read it, I swear.

Break the neck of the wax, and every one give ear.

BOYET. [Reads] 'By heaven, that thou art fair, is
most infallible; true, that thou art beauteous; truth
itself, that thou art lovely. More fairer than fair,
beautiful than beauteous, truer than truth itself,
have commiseration on thy heroical vassal! The
magnanimous and most illustrate king Cophetua
set eye upon the pernicious and indubitate beggar
Zelenophon; and he it was that might rightly say,

Veni, vidi, vici; which to annothanize in the vulgar, —O base and obscure vulgar!—videlicet, He came, saw, and overcame: he came, one; saw, two; overcame, three. Whocame? theking: why did he come? to see: why did he see? to overcome: to whom came he? to the beggar: what saw he? the beggar: who overcame he? the beggar. The conclusion is victory: on whose side? the king's. The captive is enriched: on whose side? the beggar's. The catastrophe is a nuptial: on whose side? the king's: no, on both in one, or one in both. I am the king; for so stands the comparison: thou the beggar; for so witnesseth thy lowliness. Shall I command thy love? I may: shall I enforce thy love? I could: shall I entreat thy love? I will. What shalt thou exchange for rags? robes; for tittles? titles; for thyself? me. Thus, expecting thy reply, I profane my lips on thy foot, my eyes on thy picture, and my heart on thy everypart. Thine, in the dearest design of industry,

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO.'

Thus dost thou hear the Nemean lion roar
'Gainst thee, thou lamb, that standest as his prey.
Submissive fall his princely feet before,
And he from forage will incline to play:
But if thou strive, poor soul, what art thou then?
Food for his rage, repasture for his den.

PRIN. What plume of feathers is he that indited
this letter?
What vane? what weathercock? did you ever
hear better?

BOVET. I am much deceived but I remember the style.

PRIN. Else your memory is bad, going o'er it erewhile.

BOVET. This Armado is a Spaniard, that keeps here in court;

A phantasime, a Monarcho, and one that makes To the prince and his bookmates. [sport

PRIN. Thou fellow, a word: Who gave thee this letter?

COST. I told you; my lord.

PRIN. To whom shouldst thou give it?

COST. From my lord to my lady.

PRIN. From which lord to which lady?

COST. From my lord Biron, a good master of mine, To a lady of France that he call'd Rosaline.

PRIN. Thou hast mistaken his letter. Come, lords, away.

[To Ros.] Here, sweet, put up this: 'twill be thine another day. [Exeunt PRINCESS and train.

BOVET. Who is the suitor? who is the suitor?

ROS. Shall I teach you to know?

BOVET. Ay, my continent of beauty.

Ros. Why, she that bears the bow.

Finely put off!

BOVET. My lady goes to kill horns; but, if thou marry,

Hang me by the neck, if horns that year miscarry. Finely put on!

Ros. Well, then, I am the shooter.

BOYET. And who is your deer?

Ros. If we choose by the horns, yourself come not near.

Finely put on, indeed!

MAR. You still wrangle with her, Boyet, and she strikes at the brow.

BOYET. But she herself is hit lower: have I hit her now?

Ros. Shall I come upon thee with an old saying, that was a man when King Pepin of France was a little boy, as touching the hit it?

BOYET. So I may answer thee with one as old, that was a woman when Queen Guinover of Britain was a little wench, as touching the hit it.

Ros. Thou canst not hit it, hit it, hit it,
Thou canst not hit it, my good man.

BOYET. An I cannot, cannot, cannot,
An I cannot, another can.

[*Exeunt Ros. and KATH.*

COST. By my troth, most pleasant: how both did fit it!

MAR. A mark marvellous well shot, for they both did hit it.

BOYET. A mark! O, mark but that mark! A mark, says my lady!

LET. Let the mark have a prick in't, to mete at, if it may be.

MAR. Wide o' the bow hand! i' faith, your hand is out.

COST. Indeed, a' must shoot nearer, or he'll ne'er hit the clout.

BOYET. An if my hand be out, then belike your hand is in.

COST. Then will she get the upshoot by cleaving the pin.

MAR. Come, come, you talk greasily ; your lips grow foul.

COST. She's too hard for you at pricks, sir : challenge her to bowl.

BOYET. I fear too much rubbing. Good night, my good owl. [Exeunt BOYET and MARIA.

COST. By my soul, a swain ! a most simple clown !

Lord, Lord, how the ladies and I have put him down ! O'my troth, mostsweetjest ! mostincony vulgar wit ! When it comes so smoothly off, so obscenely, as it were, so fit.

ARMADO o' th' one side,—O, a most dainty man ! To see him walk before a lady and to bear her fan ! To see him kiss his hand ! and how most sweetly a' will swear !

And his page o' t' other side, that handful of wit ! Ah, heavens, it is a most pathetical nit !

SOLA, sola ! [Shout within.

[Exit COSTARD, running.

SCENE II.

The same.

Enter HOLOFERNES, SIR NATHANIEL, and DULL.

NATH. Very reverend sport, truly ; and done in the testimony of a good conscience.

HOL. The deer was, as you know, sanguis, in blood ; ripe as the pomewater, who now hangeth

like a jewel in the ear of caelo, the sky, the welkin, the heaven; and anon falleth like a crab on the face of terra, the soil, the land, the earth.

NATH. Truly, Master Holofernes, the epithets are sweetly varied, like a scholar at the least: but, sir, I assure ye, it was a buck of the first head.

HOL. Sir Nathaniel, haud credo.

DULL. 'Twas not a haud credo; 'twas a pricket.

HOL. Most barbarous intimation! yet a kind of insinuation, as it were, in via, in way, of explication; facere, as it were, replication, or rather, ostentare, to show, as it were, his inclination, after his undressed, unpolished, uneducated, unpruned, untrained, or rather, unlettered, or ratherest, unconfirmed fashion, to insert again my haud credo for a deer.

DULL. I said the deer was not a haud credo; 'twas a pricket.

HOL. Twice-sod simplicity, bis coctus.

O thou monster Ignorance, how deformed dost thou look!

NATH. Sir, he hath never fed of the dainties that are bred in a book; he hath not eat paper, as it were; he hath not drunk ink: his intellect is not replenished; he is only an animal, only sensible in the duller parts:

And such barren plants are set before us, that we thankful should be,

Which we of taste and feeling are, for those parts that do fructify in us more than he.

For as it would ill become me to be vain, indiscreet, or a fool,

So were there a patch set on learning, to see him in a school :

But omne bene, say I ; being of an old father's mind,

Many can brook the weather that love not the wind.

DULL. You two are book-men : can you tell me by your wit

What was a month old at Cain's birth, that's not five weeks old as yet ?

HOL. Dictynna, goodman Dull ; Dictynna, goodman Dull.

DULL. What is Dictynna ?

NATH. A title to Phœbe, to Luna, to the moon.

HOL. The moon was a month old when Adam was no more,

And raught not to five weeks when he came to five-score.

The allusion holds in the exchange.

DULL. 'Tis true indeed ; the collusion holds in the exchange.

HOL. God comfort thy capacity ! I say, the allusion holds in the exchange.

DULL. And I say, the pollution holds in the exchange ; for the moon is never but a month old : and I say beside that, 'twas a pricket that the princess killed.

HOL. Sir Nathaniel, will you hear an extemporal epitaph on the death of the deer ? And, to

humour the ignorant, call I the deer the princess
killed a pricket.

NATH. Perge, good Master Holofernes, perge;
so it shall please you to abrogate scurrility.

HOL. I will something affect the letter, for it
argues facility.

*The preyful princess pierced and prick'd a pretty
pleasing pricket;*

*Some say a sore; but not a sore, till now made sore
with shooting.*

*The dogs did yell: put L to sore, then sorel jumps
from thicket;*

*Or pricket sore, or else sorel; the people fall
a-hooting.*

*If sore be sore, then L to sore makes fifty sores one
sorel.*

*Of one sore I an hundred make by adding but one
more L.*

NATH. A rare talent!

DULL. [Aside] If a talent be a claw, look how
he claws him with a talent.

HOL. This is a gift that I have, simple, simple;
a foolish extravagant spirit, full of forms, figures,
shapes, objects, ideas, apprehensions, motions,
revolutions: these are begot in the ventricle of
memory, nourished in the womb of pia mater,
and delivered upon the mellowing of occasion.
But the gift is good in those in whom it is acute,
and I am thankful for it.

NATH. Sir, I praise the Lord for you: and so

may my parishioners ; for their sons are well tutored by you, and their daughters profit very greatly under you : you are a good member of the commonwealth.

HOL. Mehercle, if their sons be ingenuous, they shall want no instruction ; if their daughters be capable, I will put it to them : but *vir sapit qui pauca loquitur* ; a soul feminine saluteth us.

Enter JAQUENETTA and COSTARD.

JAQ. God give you good Morrow, master Parson.

HOL. Master Parson, quasi pers-on. An if one should be pierced, which is the one ?

COST. Marry, master schoolmaster, he that is likest to a hogshead.

HOL. Piercing a hogshead ! a good lustre of conceit in a tuft of earth ; fire enough for a flint, pearl enough for a swine : 'tis pretty ; it is well.

JAQ. Good master Parson, be so good as read me this letter : it was given me by Costard, and sent me from Don Armado : I beseech you, read it.

HOL. Fauste, precor gelida quando pecus omne sub umbra Ruminat,—and so forth. Ah, good old Mantuan ! I may speak of thee as the traveller doth of Venice :

Venetia, Venetia,

Chi non ti vede non ti pretia.

Old Mantuan, old Mantuan ! who understandeth thee not, loves thee not. *Ut, re, sol, la, mi, fa.* Under pardon, sir, what are the contents ? or rather, as Horace says in his—What, my soul, verses ?

NATH. Ay, sir, and very learned.

HOL. Let me hear a staff, a stanze, a verse; lege, domine.

NATH. [Reads]

If love make me forsworn, how shall I swear to love?

Ah, never faith could hold, if not to beauty vow'd!
Though to myself forsworn, to thee I'll faithful prove;

Those thoughts to me were oaks, to thee like osiers bow'd.

Study his bias leaves and makes his book thine eyes,
Where all those pleasures live that art would comprehend:

If knowledge be the mark, to know thee shall suffice;
Well learned is that tongue that well can thee commend,

All ignorant that soul that seest thee without wonder;
Which is to me some praise that I thy parts admire:

Thy eye Jove's lightning bears, thy voice his dreadful thunder,

Which, not to anger bent, is music and sweet fire.
Celestial as thou art, O, pardon love this wrong,
That sings heaven's praise with such an earthly tongue.

HOL. You find not the apostrophas, and so miss the accent: let me supervise the canzonet. Here are only numbers ratified; but, for the elegancy, facility, and golden cadence of poesy, caret. Ovidius Naso was the man: and why, indeed, Naso, but for

smelling out the odoriferous flowers of fancy, the jerks of invention? Imitari is nothing: so doth the hound his master, the ape his keeper, the tired horse his rider. But, damosella virgin, was this directed to you?

JAQ. Ay, sir, from one Monsieur Biron, one of the strange queen's lords.

HOL. I will overglance the superscript: 'To the snow-white hand of the most beauteous Lady Rosaline.' I will look again on the intellect of the letter, for the nomination of the party writing to the person written unto: 'Your ladyship's in all desired employment, BIRON.' Sir Nathaniel, this Biron is one of the votaries with the king; and here he hath framed a letter to a sequent of the stranger queen's, which accidentally, or by the way of progression, hath miscarried. Trip and go, my sweet; deliver this paper into the royal hand of the king: it may concern much. Stay not thy compliment; I forgive thy duty: adieu.

JAQ. Good Costard, go with me. Sir, God save your life!

COST. Have with thee, my girl.

[*Exeunt Cost. and JAQ.*

NATH. Sir, you have done this in the fear of God, very religiously; and, as a certain father saith,—

HOL. Sir, tell not me of the father; I do fear colourable colours. But to return to the verses: did they please you, Sir Nathaniel?

NATH. Marvellous well for the pen.

HOL. I do dine to-day at the father's of a certain pupil of mine; where, if, before repast, it shall please you to gratify the table with a grace, I will, on my privilege I have with the parents of the foresaid child or pupil, undertake your ben venuto; where I will prove those verses to be very unlearned, neither savouring of poetry, wit, nor invention: I beseech your society.

NATH. And thank you too; for society, saith the text, is the happiness of life.

HOL. And, certes, the text most infallibly concludes it. [To DULL] Sir, I do invite you too; you shall not say me nay: *pauca verba.* Away! the gentles are at their game, and we will to our recreation.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

The same.

Enter BIRON, with a paper.

BIRON. The king he is hunting the deer; I am coursing myself: they have pitched a toil; I am toiling in a pitch,—pitch that defiles: defile! a foul word. Well, set thee down, sorrow! for so they say the fool said, and so say I, and I the fool: well proved, wit! By the Lord, this love is as mad as Ajax: it kills sheep; it kills me, I a sheep: well proved again o' my side! I will not love: if I do, hang me; i' faith, I will not. O, but her eye,—by this light, but for her eye, I would not love her; yes, for her two eyes. Well, I do nothing in

the world but lie, and lie in my throat. By heaven, I do love: and it hath taught me to rhyme and to be melancholy; and here is part of my rhyme, and here my melancholy. Well, she hath one o' my sonnets already: the clown bore it, the fool sent it, and the lady hath it: sweet clown, sweeter fool, sweetest lady! By the world, I would not care a pin, if the other three were in. Here comes one with a paper: God give him grace to groan!

[*Stands aside.*

Enter the KING, with a paper.

KING. Ay me!

BIRON. [*Aside*] Shot, by heaven! Proceed, sweet Cupid: thou hast thumped him with thy bird-bolt under the left pap. In faith, secrets!

KING. [*Reads*]

*So sweet a kiss the golden sun gives not
To those fresh morning drops upon the rose,
As thy eye-beams, when their fresh rays have smote
The night of dew that on my cheeks down flows:
Nor shines the silver moon one half so bright
Through the transparent bosom of the deep,
As doth thy face through tears of mine give light;
Thou shonest in every tear that I do weep:
No drop but as a coach doth carry thee;
So ridest thou triumphing in my woe.
Do but behold the tears that swell in me,
And they thy glory through my grief will show:
But do not love thyself; then thou wilt keep
My tears for glasses, and still make me weep.*

*O queen of queens ! how far dost thou excel,
No thought can think, nor tongue of mortal tell.*

How shall she know my griefs ? I'll drop the paper :
Sweet leaves, shade folly. Who is he comes here ?

[*Steps aside.*]

What, Longaville ! and reading ! listen, ear.

BIRON. Now, in thy likeness, one more fool
appear !

Enter LONGAVILLE, with a paper.

LONG. Ay me, I am forsworn !

BIRON. Why, he comes in like a perjure, wearing
papers.

KING. In love, I hope : sweet fellowship in shame !

BIRON. One drunkard loves another of the name.

LONG. Am I the first that have been perjured
so ?

BIRON. I could put thee in comfort. Not by
two that I know :

Thou makest the triumviry, the corner-cap of
society,

The shape of Love's Tyburn that hangs up
simplicity.

LONG. I fear these stubborn lines lack power
to move.

O sweet Maria, empress of my love !

These numbers will I tear, and write in prose.

BIRON. O, rhymes are guards on wanton Cupid's
hose :

Disfigure not his slop.

LONG. This same shall go. [*Reads.*]

*Did not the heavenly rhetoric of thine eye,
'Gainst whom the world cannot hold argument,
Persuade my heart to this false perjury ?
Vows for thee broke deserve not punishment.
A woman I forswore ; but I will prove,
Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee :
My vow was earthly, thou a heavenly love ;
Thy grace being gain'd cures all disgrace in me.
Vows are but breath, and breath a vapour is :
Then thou, fair sun, which on my earth dost shine,
Exhalest this vapour-vow ; in thee it is :
If broken then, it is no fault of mine :
If by me broke, what fool is not so wise
To lose an oath to win a paradise ?*

BIRON. This is the liver-vein, which makes flesh
a deity,
A green goose a goddess : pure, pure idolatry.
God amend us, God amend ! we are much out o'
the way.

LONG. By whom shall I send this ?—Company !
stay. [Steps aside.]

BIRON. All hid, all hid ; an old infant play.
Like a demigod here sit I in the sky,
And wretched fools' secrets heedfully o'er-eye.
More sacks to the mill ! O heavens, I have my
wish !

Enter DUMAIN, with a paper.

Dumain transform'd ! four woodcocks in a dish !

DUM. O most divine Kate !

BIRON. O most profane coxcomb !

DUM. By heaven, the wonder in a mortal eye !

BIRON. By earth, she is not, corporal, there you lie.

DUM. Her amber hair for foul hath amber quoted.

BIRON. An amber-colour'd raven was well noted.

DUM. As upright as the cedar.

BIRON. Stoop, I say ;

Her shoulder is with child.

DUM. As fair as day.

BIRON. Ay, as some days ; but then no sun must shine.

DUM. O that I had my wish !

LONG. And I had mine !

KING. And I mine too, good Lord !

BIRON. Amen, so I had mine : is not that a good word ?

DUM. I would forget her ; but a fever she Reigns in my blood and will remember'd be.

BIRON. A fever in your blood ! why, then incision Would let her out in saucers : sweet misprision !

DUM. Once more I'll read the ode that I have writ.

BIRON. Once more I'll mark how love can vary wit.

DUM. [Reads]

On a day—alack the day !—

Love, whose month is ever May,

Spied a blossom passing fair

Playing in the wanton air :

*Through the velvet leaves the wind,
All unseen, can passage find ;
That the lover, sick to death,
Wish himself the heaven's breath.
Air, quoth he, thy cheeks may blow ;
Air, would I might triumph so !
But, alack, my hand is sworn
Ne'er to pluck thee from thy thorn ;
Vow, alack, for youth unmeet,
Youth so apt to pluck a sweet !
Do not call it sin in me,
That I am forsworn for thee ;
Thou for whom Jove would swear
Juno but an Ethiope were ;
And deny himself for Jove,
Turning mortal for thy love.*

This will I send and something else more plain,
That shall express my true love's fasting pain.
O, would the king, Biron, and Longaville,
Were lovers too ! Ill, to example ill,
Would from my forehead wipe a perjured note ;
For none offend where all alike do dote.

LONG. [Advancing] Dumain, thy love is far from
charity,
That in love's grief desirest society :
You may look pale, but I should blush, I know,
To be o'erheard and taken napping so.

KING. [Advancing] Come, sir, you blush ; as his
your case is such ;
You chide at him, offending twice as much ;

You do not love Maria ; Longaville
Did never sonnet for her sake compile,
Nor never lay his wreathed arms athwart
His loving bosom to keep down his heart.
I have been closely shrouded in this bush
And mark'd you both and for you both did blush :
I heard your guilty rhymes, observed your fashion,
Saw sighs reek from you, noted well your passion :
Ay me ! says one ; O Jove ! the other cries ;
One, her hairs were gold, crystal the other's eyes :
[To LONG.] You would for paradise break faith and
troth ;
[To DUM.] And Jove, for your love, would infringe
an oath.

What will Biron say when that he shall hear
Faith so infringed, which such zeal did swear ?
How will he scorn ! how will he spend his wit !
How will he triumph, leap and laugh at it !
For all the wealth that ever I did see,
I would not have him know so much by me.

BIRON. Now step I forth to whip hypocrisy.

[*Advancing.*

Ah, good my liege, I pray thee, pardon me !
Good heart, what grace hast thou, thus to reprove
These worms for loving, that art most in love ?
Your eyes do make no coaches ; in your tears
There is no certain princess that appears ;
You 'll not be perjured, 'tis a hateful thing ;
Tush, none but minstrels like of sonneting !
But are you not ashamed ? nay, are you not,
All three of you, to be thus much o'ershot ?

You found his mote ; the king your mote did
see ;

But I a beam do find in each of three.

O, what a scene of foolery have I seen,
Of sighs, of groans, of sorrow and of teen !

O me, with what strict patience have I sat,
To see a king transformed to a gnat !

To see great Hercules whipping a gig,
And profound Solomon to tune a jig,
And Nestor play at push-pin with the boys,
And critic Timon laugh at idle toys !

Where lies thy grief, O, tell me, good Dumain ?

And, gentle Longaville, where lies thy pain ?

And where my liege's ? all about the breast :

A caudle, ho !

KING. Too bitter is thy jest.

Are we betray'd thus to thy over-view ?

BIRON. Not you to me, but I betray'd by you :
I, that am honest ; I, that hold it sin
To break the vow I am engaged in ;
I am betray'd, by keeping company
With men like men of inconstancy.

When shall you see me write a thing in rhyme ?
Or groan for love ? or spend a minute's time
In pruning me ? When shall you hear that I
Will praise a hand, a foot, a face, an eye,
A gait, a state, a brow, a breast, a waist,
A leg, a limb ?

KING. Soft ! whither away so fast ?

A true man or a thief that gallops so ?

BIRON. I post from love : good lover, let me go.

Enter JAQUENETTA and COSTARD.

JAQ. God bless the king!

KING. What present hast thou there?

COST. Some certain treason.

KING. What makes treason here?

COST. Nay, it makes nothing, sir.

KING. If it mar nothing neither,
The treason and you go in peace away together.

JAQ. I beseech your grace, let this letter be
read:

Our parson misdoubts it; 'twas treason, he said.

KING. Biron, read it over. [*Giving him the paper.*
Where hadst thou it?

JAQ. Of Costard.

KING. Where hadst thou it?

COST. Of Dun Adramadio, Dun Adramadio.

[BIRON tears the letter.

KING. How now! what is in you? why dost
thou tear it?

BIRON. A toy, my liege, a toy: your grace needs
not fear it.

LONG. It did move him to passion, and therefore
let's hear it.

DUM. It is Biron's writing, and here is his name.

[*Gathering up the pieces.*

BIRON. [To COSTARD] Ah, you whoreson logger-
head! you were born to do me shame.

Guilty, my lord, guilty! I confess, I confess.

KING. What?

BIRON. That you three fools lack'd me fool to
make up the mess:

He, he, and you, and you, my liege, and I,
Are pick-purses in love, and we deserve to die.
O, dismiss this audience, and I shall tell you more.

DUM. Now the number is even.

BIRON. True, true; we are four.
Will these turtles be gone?

KING. Hence, sirs; away!

COST. Walk aside the true folk, and let the traitors
stay. [Exeunt COSTARD and JAQUENETTA.

BIRON. Sweet lords, sweet lovers, O, let us
embrace!

As true we are as flesh and blood can be:
The sea will ebb and flow, heaven show his face;
Young blood doth not obey an old decree:
We cannot cross the cause why we were born;
Therefore of all hands must we be forsworn.

KING. What, did these rent lines show some love
of thine?

BIRON. Did they, quoth you? Who sees the
heavenly Rosaline,
That, like a rude and savage man of Inde,
At the first opening of the gorgeous east,
Bows not his vassal head and stricken blind
Kisses the base ground with obedient breast?
What peremptory eagle-sighted eye
Dares look upon the heaven of her brow,
That is not blinded by her majesty?

KING. What zeal, what fury hath inspired thee
now?
My love, her mistress, is a gracious moon;
She an attending star, scarce seen a light.

BIRON. My eyes are then no eyes, nor I Biron:

O, but for my love, day would turn to night!
Of all complexions the cull'd sovereignty
Do meet, as at a fair, in her fair cheek,
Where several worthies make one dignity,

Where nothing wants that want itself doth
Lend me the flourish of all gentle tongues,— [seek.

Fie, painted rhetoric! O, she needs it not:
To things of sale a seller's praise belongs,

She passes praise; then praise too short doth
A wither'd hermit, five-score winters worn, [blot.

Might shake off fifty, looking in her eye:
Beauty doth varnish age, as if new-born,

And gives the crutch the cradle's infancy:
O, 'tis the sun that maketh all things shine.

KING. By heaven, thy love is black as ebony.

BIRON. Is ebony like her? O wood divine!

A wife of such wood were felicity.

O, who can give an oath? where is a book?

That I may swear beauty doth beauty lack,
If that she learn not of her eye to look:

No face is fair that is not full so black.

KING. O paradox! Black is the badge of hell,

The hue of dungeons and the suit of night;
And beauty's crest becomes the heavens well.

BIRON. Devils soonest tempt, resembling spirits
of light.

O, if in black my lady's brows be deck'd,

It mourns that painting and usurping hair
Should ravish doters with a false aspect;
And therefore is she born to make black fair.

Her favour turns the fashion of the days,
For native blood is counted painting now;
And therefore red, that would avoid dispraise,
Paints itself black, to imitate her brow.

DUM. To look like her are chimney-sweepers black.

LONG. And since her time are colliers counted
bright.

KING. And Ethiopes of their sweet complexion
crack.

DUM. Dark needs no candles now, for dark is light.

BIRON. Your mistresses dare never come in rain,
For fear their colours should be wash'd away.

KING. 'Twere good, yours did; for, sir, to tell
you plain,

I'll find a fairer face not wash'd to-day.

BIRON. I'll prove her fair, or talk till doomsday
here.

KING. No devil will fright thee then so much as she.

DUM. I never knew man hold vile stuff so dear.

LONG. Look, here's thy love: my foot and her
face see.

BIRON. O, if the streets were paved with thine eyes,
Her feet were much too dainty for such tread!

DUM. O vile! then, as she goes, what upward lies
The street should see as she walk'd overhead.

KING. But what of this? are we not all in love?

BIRON. Nothing so sure; and thereby all for-
sworn.

KING. Then leave this chat; and, good Biron,
now prove

Our loving lawful, and our faith not torn.

DUM. Ay, marry, there; some flattery for this evil.

LONG. O, some authority how to proceed;
Some tricks, some quilletts, how to cheat the devil.

DUM. Some salve for perjury.

BIRON. 'Tis more than need.
Have at you, then, affection's men at arms.
Consider what you first did swear unto,
To fast, to study, and to see no woman;
Flat treason 'gainst the kingly state of youth.
Say, can you fast? your stomachs are too young;
And abstinence engenders maladies.

And where that you have vow'd to study, lords,
In that each of you have forsworn his book,
Can you still dream and pore and thereon look?
For when would you, my lord, or you, or you,
Have found the ground of study's excellence
Without the beauty of a woman's face?

[From women's eyes this doctrine I derive;
They are the ground, the books, the academes
From whence doth spring the true Promethean fire.]

Why, universal plodding poisons up
The nimble spirits in the arteries,
As motion and long-during action tires
The sinewy vigour of the traveller.

Now, for not looking on a woman's face,
You have in that forsworn the use of eyes
And study too, the causer of your vow;
For where is any author in the world
Teaches such beauty as a woman's eye?
Learning is but an adjunct to ourself
And where we are our learning likewise is:

Then when ourselves we see in ladies' eyes,
Do we not likewise see our learning there?
O, we have made a vow to study, lords,
And in that vow we have forsworn our books.
For when would you, my liege, or you, or you,
In leaden contemplation have found out
Such fiery numbers as the prompting eyes
Of beauty's tutors have enrich'd you with?
Other slow arts entirely keep the brain;
And therefore, finding barren practisers,
Scarce show a harvest of their heavy toil:
But love, first learned in a lady's eyes,
Lives not alone immured in the brain;
But, with the motion of all elements,
Courses as swift as thought in every power,
And gives to every power a double power,
Above their functions and their offices.
It adds a precious seeing to the eye;
A lover's eyes will gaze an eagle blind;
A lover's ear will hear the lowest sound,
When the suspicious head of theft is stopp'd:
Love's feeling is more soft and sensible
Than are the tender horns of cockled snails;
Love's tongue proves dainty Bacchus gross in
taste:
For valour, is not Love a Hercules,
Still climbing trees in the Hesperides?
Subtle as Sphinx; as sweet and musical
As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair:
And when Love speaks, the voice of all the gods
Make heaven drowsy with the harmony.

Never durst poet touch a pen to write
Until his ink were temper'd with Love's sighs ;
O, then his lines would ravish savage ears
And plant in tyrants mild humility.
From women's eyes this doctrine I derive :
They sparkle still the right Promethean fire ;
They are the books, the arts, the academes,
That show, contain and nourish all the world :
Else none at all in ought proves excellent.
Then fools you were these women to forswear,
Or keeping what is sworn, you will prove fools.
For wisdom's sake, a word that all men love,
Or for love's sake, a word that loves all men,
Or for men's sake, the authors of these women,
Or women's sake, by whom we men are men,
Let us once lose our oaths to find ourselves,
Or else we lose ourselves to keep our oaths.
It is religion to be thus forsworn,
For charity itself fulfils the law,
And who can sever love from charity ?

KING. Saint Cupid, then ! and, soldiers, to the field !

BIRON. Advance your standards, and upon them,
lords ;

Pell-mell, down with them ! but be first advised,
In conflict that you get the sun of them.

LONG. Now to plain-dealing ; lay these glozes by :
Shall we resolve to woo these girls of France ?

KING. And win them too : therefore let us devise
Some entertainment for them in their tents.

BIRON. First, from the park let us conduct them
thither;
Then homeward every man attach the hand
Of his fair mistress: in the afternoon
We will with some strange pastime solace them,
Such as the shortness of the time can shape;
For revels, dances, masks and merry hours
Forerun fair Love, strewing her way with flowers.

KING. Away, away! no time shall be omitted
That will betime, and may by us be fitted.

BIRON. Allons! allons! Sow'd cockle reap'd no
corn;
And justice always whirls in equal measure:
Light wenches may prove plagues to men forsworn;
If so, our copper buys no better treasure.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

The same.

Enter HOLOFERNES, SIR NATHANIEL, and DULL.

HOL. Satis quod sufficit.

NATH. I praise God for you, sir: your reasons at dinner have been sharp and sententious; pleasant without scurrility, witty without affection, audacious without impudency, learned without opinion, and

strange without heresy. I did converse this quondam day with a companion of the king's, who is intituled, nominated, or called, Don Adriano de Armado.

HOL. Novi hominem tanquam te: his humour is lofty, his discourse peremptory, his tongue filed, his eye ambitious, his gait majestical, and his general behaviour vain, ridiculous, and thrasonical. He is too picked, too spruce, too affected, too odd, as it were, too peregrinate, as I may call it.

NATH. A most singular and choice epithet.

[*Draws out his table-book.*

HOL. He draweth out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument. I abhor such fanatical phantasimes, such insociable and point-devise companions; such rackers of orthography, as to speak dout, fine, when he should say doubt; det, when he should pronounce debt,—d, e, b, t, not d, e, t: he clepeth a calf, cauf; half, hauf: neighbour vocatur nebour; neigh abbreviated ne. This is abhominable,—which he would call abominable: it insinuateth me of insanie: anne intelligis, domine? to make frantic, lunatic.

NATH. Laus Deo, bene intelligo.

HOL. Bon, bon, fort bon, Priscian! a little scratched, 'twill serve.

NATH. Videsne quis venit?

HOL. Video, et gaudeo.

Enter ARMADO, MOTH, and COSTARD.

ARM. Chirrah!

[*To MOTH.*

HOL. Quare chirrah, not sirrah?

ARM. Men of peace, well encountered.

HOL. Most military sir, salutation.

MOTH. [Aside to COSTARD] They have been at a great feast of languages, and stolen the scraps.

COST. O, they have lived long on the alms-basket of words. I marvel thy master hath not eaten thee for a word; for thou art not so long by the head as honorificabilitudinitatibus. thou art easier swallowed than a flap-dragon.

MOTH. Peace! the peal begins.

ARM. [To HOL.] Monsieur, are you not lettered?

MOTH. Yes, yes; he teaches boys the horn-book. What is a, b, spelt backward, with the horn on his head?

HOL. Ba, pueritia, with a horn added.

MOTH. Ba, most silly sheep with a horn. You hear his learning.

HOL. Quis, quis, thou consonant?

MOTH. The third of the five vowels, if you repeat them; or the fifth, if I.

HOL. I will repeat them,—a, e, i,—

MOTH. Thesheep: theother two concludesit,—o, u.

ARM. Now, by the salt wave of the Mediter-raneum, a sweet touch, a quick venue of wit! snip, snap, quick and home! it rejoiceth my intel-lect: true wit!

MOTH. Offered by a child to an old man; which is wit-old.

HOL. What is the figure? what is the figure?

MOTH. Horns.

HOL. Thou disputest like an infant: go, whip thy gig.

MOTH. Lend me your horn to make one, and I will whip about your infamy circum circa,—a gig of a cuckold's horn.

COST. An I had but one penny in the world, thou shouldst have it to buy gingerbread: hold, there is the very remuneration I had of thy master, thou halfpenny purse of wit, thou pigeon-egg of discretion. O, an the heavens were so pleased that thou wert but my bastard, what a joyful father wouldest thou make me! Go to; thou hast it ad dunghill, at the fingers' ends, as they say.

HOL. O, I smell false Latin; dunghill for unguem.

ARM. Arts-man, preambulate, we will be singuled from the barbarous. Do you not educate youth at the charge-house on the top of the mountain?

HOL. Or mons, the hill.

ARM. At your sweet pleasure, for the mountain.

HOL. I do, sans question.

ARM. Sir, it is the king's most sweet pleasure and affection to congratulate the princess at her pavilion in the posteriors of this day, which the rude multitude call the afternoon.

HOL. The posterior of the day, most generous sir, is liable, congruent and measurable for the afternoon: the word is well culled, chose, sweet and apt, I do assure you, sir, I do assure.

ARM. Sir, the king is a noble gentleman, and my familiar, I do assure ye, very good friend: for

what is inward between us, let it pass. I do beseech thee, remember thy courtesy; I beseech thee, apparel thy head: and among other important and most serious designs, and of great import indeed, too, but let that pass: for I must tell thee, it will please his grace, by the world, sometime to lean upon my poor shoulder, and with his royal finger, thus, dally with my excrement, with my mustachio; but, sweet heart, let that pass. By the world, I recount no fable: some certain special honours it pleaseth his greatness to impart to Armado, a soldier, a man of travel, that hath seen the world; but let that pass. The very all of all is,—but, sweet heart, I do implore secrecy,—that the king would have me present the princess, sweet chuck, with some delightful ostentation, or show, or pageant, or antique, or firework. Now, understanding that the curate and your sweet self are good at such eruptions and sudden breaking out of mirth, as it were, I have acquainted you withal, to the end to crave your assistance.

HOL. Sir, you shall present before her the Nine Worthies. Sir, as concerning some entertainment of time, some show in the posterior of this day, to be rendered by our assistants, at the king's command, and this most gallant, illustrate, and learned gentleman, before the princess; I say none so fit as to present the Nine Worthies.

NATH. Where will you find men worthy enough to present them?

HOL. Joshua, yourself; myself and this gallant gentleman, Judas Maccabæus; this swain, because of his great limb or joint, shall pass Pompey the Great; the page, Hercules,—

ARM. Pardon, sir; error: he is not quantity enough for that Worthy's thumb: he is not so big as the end of his club.

HOL. Shall I have audience? he shall present Hercules in minority: his enter and exit shall be strangling a snake; and I will have an apology for that purpose.

MOTH. An excellent device! so, if any of the audience hiss, you may cry 'Well done, Hercules! now thou crushest the snake!' that is the way to make an offence gracious, though few have the grace to do it.

ARM. For the rest of the Worthies?—

HOL. I will play three myself.

MOTH. Thrice-worthy gentleman!

ARM. Shall I tell you a thing?

HOL. We attend.

ARM. We will have, if this fadge not, an antique. I beseech you, follow.

HOL. Via, goodman Dull! thou hast spoken no word all this while.

DULL. Nor understood none neither, sir.

HOL. Allons! we will employ thee.

DULL. I'll make one in a dance, or so; or I will play On the tabor to the Worthies, and let them dance the hay.

HOL. Most dull, honest Dull! To our sport,
away! [Exeunt.

SCENE II.

The same.

*Enter the PRINCESS, KATHARINE, ROSALINE,
and MARIA.*

PRIN. Sweet hearts, we shall be rich ere we
depart,

If fairings come thus plentifully in :
A lady wall'd about with diamonds !

Look you what I have from the loving king.

Ros. Madame, came nothing else along with that?

PRIN. Nothing but this ! yes, as much love in
rhyme

As would be cramm'd up in a sheet of paper,
Writ o' both sides the leaf, margent and all,
That he was fain to seal on Cupid's name.

Ros. That was the way to make his godhead wax,
For he hath been five thousand years a boy.

KATH. Ay, and a shrewd unhappy gallows too.

Ros. You'll ne'er be friends with him ; a' kill'd
your sister.

KATH. He made her melancholy, sad, and heavy;
And so she died : had she been light, like you,
Of such a merry, nimble, stirring spirit,
She might ha' been a grandam ere she died :
And so may you ; for a light heart lives long.

Ros. What's your dark meaning, mouse, of this
light word ?

KATH. A light condition in a beauty dark.

Ros. We need more light to find your meaning out.

KATH. You 'll mar the light by taking it in snuff;
Therefore I 'll darkly end the argument.

Ros. Look, what you do, you do it still i' the dark.

KATH. So do not you, for you are a light wench.

Ros. Indeed I weigh not you, and therefore light.

KATH. You weigh me not? O, that 's you care not for me.

Ros. Great reason; for 'past cure is still past care.'

PRIN. Well bandied both; a set of wit well play'd.
But, Rosaline, you have a favour too:

Who sent it? and what is it?

Ros. I would you knew:
An if my face were but as fair as yours,
My favour were as great; be witness this.
Nay, I have verses too, I thank Biron:
The numbers true; and, were the numbering too,
I were the fairest goddess on the ground:
I am compared to twenty thousand fairs.
O, he hath drawn my picture in his letter!

PRIN. Any thing like?

Ros. Much in the letters; nothing in the praise.

PRIN. Beauteous as ink; a good conclusion.

KATH. Fair as a text B in a copy-book.

Ros. 'Ware pencils, ho! let me not die your debtor,

My red dominical, my golden letter:

O that your face were not so full of O's!

KATH. A pox of that jest! and I beshrewall shrows.

PRIN. But, Katharine, what was sent to you from fair Dumain?

KATH. Madam, this glove.

PRIN. Did he not send you twain?

KATH. Yes, madam, and moreover
Some thousand verses of a faithful lover,
A huge translation of hypocrisy,
Vilely compiled, profound simplicity.

MAR. This and these pearls to me sent Longa-
ville:

The letter is too long by half a mile.

PRIN. I think no less. Dost thou not wish in heart
The chain were longer and the letter short?

MAR. Ay, or I would these hands might never part.

PRIN. We are wise girls to mock our lovers so.

Ros. They are worse fools to purchase mocking so.
That same Biron I'll torture ere I go :
O that I knew he were but in by the week !
How I would make him fawn and beg and seek
And wait the season and observe the times
And spend his prodigal wits in bootless rhymes
And shape his service wholly to my hests
And make him proud to make me proud that jests!
So perttaunt-like would I o'ersway his state
That he should be my fool and I his fate.

PRIN. None are so surely caught, when they
are catch'd,

As wit turn'd fool : folly, in wisdom hatch'd,
Hath wisdom's warrant and the help of school

And wit's own grace to grace a learned fool.

Ros. The blood of youth burns not with such excess

As gravity's revolt to wantonness.

MAR. Folly in fools bears not so strong a note
As foolery in the wise, when wit doth dote ;
Since all the power thereof it doth apply
To prove, by wit, worth in simplicity.

PRIN. Here comes Boyet, and mirth is in his face.

Enter BOYET.

BOYET. O, I am stabb'd with laughter ! Where's her grace ?

PRIN. Thy news, Boyet ?

BOYET. Prepare, madam, prepare !
Arm, wenches, arm ! encounters mounted are
Against your peace : Love doth approach disguised,
Armed in arguments ; you'll be surprised :
Muster your wits ; stand in your own defence ;
Or hide your heads like cowards, and fly hence.

PRIN. Saint Denis to Saint Cupid ! What are they
That charge their breath against us ? say, scout, say.

BOYET. Under the cool shade of a sycamore
I thought to close mine eyes some half an hour ;
When, lo ! to interrupt my purposed rest,
Toward that shade I might behold address
The king and his companions : warily
I stole into a neighbour thicket by,
And overheard what you shall overhear ;
That, by and by, disguised they will be here.
Their herald is a pretty knavish page,
That well by heart hath conn'd his embassage :

Action and accent did they teach him there ;
'Thus must thou speak,' and 'thus thy body bear:'
And ever and anon they made a doubt
Presence majestical would put him out ;
'For,' quoth the king, 'an angel shalt thou see ;
Yet fear not thou, but speak audaciously.'
The boy replied, 'An angel is not evil ;
I should have fear'd her had she been a devil.'
With that, all laugh'd and clapp'd him on the
shoulder,
Making the bold wag by their praises bolder :
One rubb'd his elbow thus, and fleer'd and swore
A better speech was never spoke before ;
Another, with his finger and his thumb,
Cried, 'Via ! we will do 't, come what will come ;'
The third he caper'd, and cried, 'All goes well ;'
The fourth turn'd on the toe, and down he fell.
With that, they all did tumble on the ground,
With such a zealous laughter, so profound,
That in this spleen ridiculous appears,
To check their folly, passion's solemn tears.

PRIN. But what, but what, come they to visit us ?

BOVET. They do, they do ; and are apparell'd thus,
Like Muscovites or Russians, as I guess.
Their purpose is to parle, to court and dance ;
And every one his love-feat will advance
Unto his several mistress, which they 'll know
By favours several which they did bestow.

PRIN. And will they so ? the gallants shall be
task'd ;
For, ladies, we will every one be mask'd ;

And not a man of them shall have the grace,
Despite of suit, to see a lady's face.
Hold, Rosaline, this favour thou shalt wear,
And then the king will court thee for his dear;
Hold, take thou this, my sweet, and give me thine,
So shall Biron take me for Rosaline.

And change you favours too; so shall your loves
Woo contrary, deceived by these removes.

Ros. Come on, then; wear the favours most in sight.

KATH. But in this changing what is your intent?

PRIN. The effect of my intent is to cross theirs:
They do it but in mocking merriment;
And mock for mock is only my intent.
Their several counsels they unbosom shall
To loves mistook, and so be mock'd withal
Upon the next occasion that we meet,
With visages display'd, to talk and greet.

Ros. But shall we dance, if they desire us to 't?

PRIN. No, to the death, we will not move a foot;
Nor to their penn'd speech render we no grace,
But while 'tis spoke each turn away her face.

BOVET. Why, that contempt will kill the
speaker's heart,

And quite divorce his memory from his part.

PRIN. Therefore I do it; and I make no doubt
The rest will ne'er come in, if he be out.
There's no such sport as sport by sport o'erthrown,
To make theirs ours and ours none but our own:
So shall we stay, mocking intended game,
And they, well mock'd, depart away with shame.

[*Trumpets sound within.*

BOVET. The trumpet sounds: be mask'd; the
maskers come. [The Ladies mask.

Enter Blackamoors with music; MOTH; the KING,
BIRON, LONGAVILLE, and DUMAIN, in Russian
habits, and masked.

MOTH. All hail, the richest beauties on the earth!—

BOVET. Beauties no richer than rich taffeta.

MOTH. A holy parcel of the fairest dames.

[The Ladies turn their backs to him.

That ever turn'd their—backs—to mortal views!

BIRON. [Aside to MOTH] Their eyes, villain, their
eyes.

MOTH. That ever turn'd their eyes to mortal
views!—

Out—

BOVET. True; out indeed.

MOTH. Out of your favours, heavenly spirits,
vouchsafe

Not to behold—

BIRON. [Aside to MOTH] Once to behold, rogue.

MOTH. Once to behold with your sun-beamed eyes,
— with your sun-beamed eyes—

BOVET. They will not answer to that epithet;
You were best call it 'daughter-beamed eyes.'

MOTH. They do not mark me, and that brings
me out.

BIRON. Is this your perfectness? be gone, you
rogue! [Exit MOTH.

Ros. What would these strangers? know their
minds, Boyet:

If they do speak our language, 'tis our will

That some plain man recount their purposes :
Know what they would.

BOYET. What would you with the princess ?

BIRON. Nothing but peace and gentle visitation.

Ros. What would they, say they ?

BOYET. Nothing but peace and gentle visitation.

Ros. Why, that they have ; and bid them so be
gone.

BOYET. She says, you have it, and you may be gone.

KING. Say to her, we have measured many miles
To tread a measure with her on this grass.

BOYET. They say, that they have measured many
a mile

To tread a measure with you on this grass.

Ros. It is not so. Ask them how many inches
Is in one mile : if they have measured many,
The measure then of one is easily told.

BOYET. If to come hither you have measured miles,
And many miles, the princess bids you tell
How many inches doth fill up one mile.

BIRON. Tell her, we measure them by weary steps.

BOYET. She hears herself.

Ros. How many weary steps,
Of many weary miles you have o'ergone,
Are number'd in the travel of one mile ?

BIRON. We number nothing that we spend for you :
Our duty is so rich, so infinite,
That we may do it still without accompt.
Vouchsafe to show the sunshine of your face,
That we, like savages, may worship it.

Ros. My face is but a moon, and clouded too.

KING. Blessed are clouds, to do as such clouds do!
Vouchsafe, bright moon, and these thy stars, to shine,
Those clouds removed, upon our watery eyne.

Ros. O vain petitioner! beg a greater matter;
Thou now request'st but moonshine in the water.

KING. Then, in our measure do but vouchsafe
one change.

Thou bid'st me beg: this begging is not strange.

Ros. Play, music, then! Nay, you must do it
soon. [Music plays.]

Not yet! no dance! Thus change I like the moon.

KING. Will you not dance? How come you
thus estranged?

Ros. You took the moon at full, but now she's
changed.

KING. Yet still she is the moon, and I the man.
The music plays; vouchsafe some motion to it.

Ros. Our ears vouchsafe it.

KING. But your legs should do it.

Ros. Since you are strangers and come here by
chance,

We'll not be nice: take hands. We will not dance.

KING. Why take we hands, then?

Ros. Only to part friends:
Curtsy, sweet hearts; and so the measure ends.

KING. More measure of this measure; be not nice.

Ros. We can afford no more at such a price.

KING. Prize you yourselves: what buys your
company?

Ros. Your absence only.

KING. That can never be.

Ros. Then cannot we be bought : and so, adieu ;
Twice to your visor, and half once to you.

KING. If you deny to dance, let's hold more chat.

Ros. In private, then.

KING. I am best pleased with that.

[*They converse apart.*

BIRON. White-handed mistress, one sweet word
with thee.

PRIN. Honey, and milk, and sugar ; there is three.

BIRON. Nay then, two treys, and if you grow so
nice,

Metheglin, wort, and malmsey : well run, dice !

There's half-a-dozen sweets.

PRIN. Seventh sweet, adieu :

Since you can cog, I'll play no more with you.

BIRON. One word in secret.

PRIN. Let it not be sweet.

BIRON. Thou grievest my gall.

PRIN. Gall ! bitter.

BIRON. Therefore meet.

[*They converse apart.*

DUM. Will you vouchsafe with me to change a
word ?

MAR. Name it.

DUM. Fair lady,—

MAR. Say you so ? Fair lord,—

Take that for your fair lady.

DUM. Please it you,

As much in private, and I'll bid adieu.

[*They converse apart.*

KATH. What, was your vizard made without a tongue?

LONG. I know the reason, lady, why you ask.

KATH. O for your reason! quickly, sir; I long.

LONG. You have a double tongue within your mask,
And would afford my speechless vizard half.

KATH. Veal, quoth the Dutchman. Is not
'veal' a calf?

LONG. A calf, fair lady!

KATH. No, a fair lord calf.

LONG. Let's part the word.

KATH. No, I'll not be your half:
Take all, and wean it; it may prove an ox.

LONG. Look, how you butt yourself in these
sharp mocks!

Will you give horns, chaste lady? do not so.

KATH. Then die a calf, before your horns do grow.

LONG. One word in private with you, ere I die.

KATH. Bleat softly then; the butcher hears you
cry. [*They converse apart.*

BOYET. The tongues of mocking wenches are as
keen

As is the razor's edge invisible,
Cutting a smaller hair than may be seen,
Above the sense of sense; so sensible
Seemeth their conference; their conceits have wings
Fleeter than arrows, bullets, wind, thought, swifter
things.

Ros. Not one word more, my maids ; break off,
break off.

BIRON. By heaven, all dry-beaten with pure scoff !

KING. Farewell, mad wenches ; you have simple
wits.

PRIN. Twenty adieus, my frozen Muscovits.

[*Exeunt KING, Lords, and Blackamoors.*

Are these the breed of wits so wonder'd at ?

BOYET. Tapers they are, with your sweet breaths
puff'd out.

Ros. Well-liking wits they have ; gross, gross ;
fat, fat.

PRIN. O poverty in wit, kingly-poor flout !

Will they not, think you, hang themselves to-night ?

Or ever, but in vizards, show their faces ?

This pert Biron was out of countenance quite.

Ros. O, they were all in lamentable cases !
The king was weeping-ripe for a good word.

PRIN. Biron did swear himself out of all suit.

MAR. Dumain was at my service, and his sword :
No point, quoth I ; my servant straight was mute.

KATH. Lord Longaville said, I came o'er his heart ;
And trow you what he called me ?

PRIN. Qualm, perhaps.

KATH. Yes, in good faith.

PRIN. Go, sickness as thou art !

Ros. Well, better wits have worn plain statute-caps.
But will you hear ? the king is my love sworn.

PRIN. And quick Biron hath plighted faith to me.

KATH. And Longaville was for my service born.

MAR. Dumain is mine, as sure as bark on tree.

BOVET. Madam, and pretty mistresses, give ear :
Immediately they will again be here
In their own shapes ; for it can never be
They will digest this harsh indignity.

PRIN. Will they return ?

BOVET. They will, they will, God knows,
And leap for joy, though they are lame with blows :
Therefore change favours ; and, when they repair,
Blow like sweet roses in this summer air.

PRIN. How blow ? how blow ? speak to be
understood.

BOVET. Fair ladies mask'd are roses in their bud ;
Dismask'd, their damask sweet commixture shown,
Are angels vailing clouds, or roses blown.

PRIN. Avaunt, perplexity ! What shall we do,
If they return in their own shapes to woo ?

Ros. Good madam, if by me you 'll be advised,
Let 's mock them still, as well known as disguised :
Let us complain to them what fools were here,
Disguised like Muscovites, in shapeless gear ;
And wonder what they were and to what end
Their shallow shows and prologue vilely penn'd
And their rough carriage so ridiculous,
Should be presented at our tent to us.

BOVET. Ladies, withdraw : the gallants are at hand.

PRIN. Whip to our tents, as roes run o'er land.

[*Exeunt PRINCESS, Ros., KATH., and MARIA.*

*Re-enter the KING, BIRON, LONGAVILLE, and
DUMAIN, in their proper habits.*

KING. Fair sir, God save you ! Where 's the
princess ?

BOYET. Gone to her tent. Please it your majesty
Command me any service to her thither?

KING. That she vouchsafe me audience for one
word.

BOYET. I will; and so will she, I know, my lord.

[*Exit.*

BIRON. This fellow pecks up wit as pigeons
pease,

And utters it again when God doth please:
He is wit's pedler, and retails his wares
At wakes and wassails, meetings, markets, fairs;
And we that sell by gross, the Lord doth know,
Have not the grace to grace it with such show.
This gallant pins the wenches on his sleeve;
Had he been Adam, he had tempted Eve;
A' can carve too, and lisp: why, this is he
That kiss'd his hand away in courtesy;
This is the ape of form, monsieur the nice,
That, when he plays at tables, chides the dice
In honourable terms: nay, he can sing
A mean most meanly; and in ushering
Mend him who can: the ladies call him sweet;
The stairs, as he treads on them, kiss his feet:
This is the flower that smiles on every one,
To show his teeth as white as whale's bone;
And consciences, that will not die in debt,
Pay him the due of honey-tongued Boyet.

KING. A blister on his sweet tongue, with my
heart,
That put Armado's page out of his part!

BIRON. See where it comes ! Behaviour, what
wert thou
Till this madman show'd thee ? and what art thou
now ?

*Re-enter the PRINCESS, ushered by BOYET ; ROSALINE,
MARIA, and KATHARINE.*

KING. All hail, sweet madam, and fair time of day !

PRIN. 'Fair' in 'all hail' is foul, as I conceive.

KING. Construe my speeches better, if you may.

PRIN. Then wish me better ; I will give you leave.

KING. We came to visit you, and purpose now
To lead you to our court ; vouchsafe it then.

PRIN. This field shall hold me ; and so hold your
vow :

Nor God, nor I, delights in perjured men.

KING. Rebuke me not for that which you provoke :
The virtue of your eye must break my oath.

PRIN. You nickname virtue ; vice you should
have spoke ;

For virtue's office never breaks men's troth.

Now by my maiden honour, yet as pure

As the unsullied lily, I protest,

A world of torments though I should endure,

I would not yield to be your house's guest ;

So much I hate a breaking cause to be

Of heavenly oaths, vow'd with integrity.

KING. O, you have lived in desolation here,

Unseen, unvisited, much to our shame.

PRIN. Not so, my lord ; it is not so, I swear ;

We have had pastimes here and pleasant game :

A mess of Russians left us but of late.

KING. How, madam ! Russians !

PRIN. Ay, in truth, my lord ;
Trim gallants, full of courtship and of state.

Ros. Madam, speak true. It is not so, my lord :
My lady, to the manner of the days,
In courtesy gives undeserving praise.
We four indeed confronted were with four
In Russian habit : here they stay'd an hour,
And talk'd apace ; and in that hour, my lord,
They did not bless us with one happy word.
I dare not call them fools ; but this I think,
When they are thirsty, fools would fain have drink.

BIRON. This jest is dry to me. Fair gentle sweet,
Your wit makes wise things foolish : when we greet,
With eyes best seeing, heaven's fiery eye,
By light we lose light : your capacity
Is of that nature that to your huge store
Wise things seem foolish and rich things but poor.

Ros. This proves you wise and rich, for in my eye,—

BIRON. I am a fool, and full of poverty.

Ros. But that you take what doth to you belong,
It were a fault to snatch words from my tongue.

BIRON. O, I am yours, and all that I possess !

Ros. All the fool mine ?

BIRON. I cannot give you less.

Ros. Which of the vizards was it that you wore ?

BIRON. Where ? when ? what vizard ? why demand you this ?

Ros. There, then, that vizard ; that superfluous case
That hid the worse and show'd the better face.

KING. We are descried ; they'll mock us now downright.

DUM. Let us confess and turn it to a jest.

PRIN. Amazed, my lord ? why looks your highness sad ?

Ros. Help, hold his brows ! he'll swoon ! Why look you pale ?

Sea-sick, I think, coming from Muscovy.

BIRON. Thus pour the stars down plagues for perjury.

Can any face of brass hold longer out ?

Here stand I : lady, dart thy skill at me ;

Bruise me with scorn, confound me with a flout ;

Thrust thy sharp wit quite through my ignorance ;

Cut me to pieces with thy keen conceit ;

And I will wish thee never more to dance,

Nor never more in Russian habit wait.

O, never will I trust to speeches penn'd,

Nor to the motion of a schoolboy's tongue,

Nor never come in vizard to my friend,

Nor woo in rhyme, like a blind harper's song !

Taffeta phrases, silken terms precise,

Three-piled hyperboles, spruce affectation,

Figures pedantical ; these summer-flies

Have blown me full of maggot ostentation :

I do forswear them ; and I here protest,

By this white glove,—how white the hand,

God knows !—

Henceforth my wooing mind shall be express'd

In russet yeas and honest kersey noes :

And, to begin, wench,—so God help me, la!—
My love to thee is sound, sans crack or flaw.

Ros. Sans sans, I pray you.

BIRON. Yet I have a trick
Of the old rage: bear with me, I am sick;
I'll leave it by degrees. Soft, let us see:
Write, 'Lord have mercy on us' on those three;
They are infected; in their hearts it lies;
They have the plague, and caught it of your eyes;
These lords are visited; you are not free,
For the Lord's tokens on you do I see.

PRIN. No, they are free that gave these tokens
to us.

BIRON. Our states are forfeit: seek not to undo us.

Ros. It is not so; for how can this be true,
That you stand forfeit, being those that sue?

BIRON. Peace! for I will not have to do with you.

Ros. Nor shall not, if I do as I intend.

BIRON. Speak for yourselves; my wit is at an
end.

KING. Teach us, sweet madam, for our rude
transgression

Some fair excuse.

PRIN. The fairest is confession.

Were not you here but even now disguised?

KING. Madam, I was.

PRIN. And were you well advised?

KING. I was, fair madam.

PRIN. When you then were here,
What did you whisper in your lady's ear?

KING. That more than all the world I did
respect her.

PRIN. When she shall challenge this, you will
reject her.

KING. Upon mine honour, no.

PRIN. Peace, peace ! forbear :
Your oath once broke, you force not to forswear.

KING. Despise me, when I break this oath of
mine.

PRIN. I will : and therefore keep it. Rosaline,
What did the Russian whisper in your ear ?

Ros. Madam, he swore that he did hold me dear
As precious eyesight, and did value me
Above this world ; adding thereto moreover
That he would wed me, or else die my lover.

PRIN. God give thee joy of him ! the noble lord
Most honourably doth uphold his word.

KING. What mean you, madam ? by my life, my
troth,

I never swore this lady such an oath.

Ros. By heaven, you did ; and to confirm it plain,
You gave me this : but take it, sir, again.

KING. My faith and this the princess I did give :
I knew her by this jewel on her sleeve.

PRIN. Pardon me, sir, this jewel did she wear ;
And Lord Biron, I thank him, is my dear.
What, will you have me, or your pearl again ?

BIRON. Neither of either ; I remit both twain.
I see the trick on 't : here was a consent,
Knowing beforehand of our merriment,

To dash it like a Christmas comedy :
Some carry-tale, some please-man, some slight zany,
Some mumble-news, some trencher-knight, some
Dick,
That smiles his cheek in years and knows the trick
To make my lady laugh when she's disposed,
Told our intents before ; which once disclosed,
The ladies did change favours : and then we,
Following the signs, woo'd but the sign of she.
Now, to our perjury to add more terror,
We are again forsworn, in will and error.
Much upon this it is : and might not you

[To BOYET.

Forestall our sport, to make us thus untrue ?
Do not you know my lady's foot by the squier,
And laugh upon the apple of her eye ?
And stand between her back, sir, and the fire,
Holding a trencher, jesting merrily ?
You put our page out : go, you are allow'd ;
Die when you will, a smock shall be your shroud.
You leer upon me, do you ? there's an eye
Wounds like a leaden sword.

BOYET. Full merrily
Hath this brave manage, this career, been run.
BIRON. Lo, he is tilting straight ! Peace ! I
have done.

Enter COSTARD.

Welcome, pure wit ! thou partest a fair fray.
Cost. O Lord, sir, they would know
Whether the three Worthies shall come in or no.

BIRON. What, are there but three?

COST. No, sir; but it is vara fine,
For every one pursents three.

BIRON. And three times thrice is nine.

COST. Not so, sir; under correction, sir; I hope
it is not so.

You cannot beg us, sir, I can assure you, sir; we
know what we know:

I hope, sir, three times thrice, sir,—

BIRON. Is not nine.

COST. Under correction, sir, we know whereuntil
it doth amount.

BIRON. By Jove, I always took three threes for nine.

COST. O Lord, sir, it were pity you should get
your living by reckoning, sir.

BIRON. How much is it?

COST. O Lord, sir, the parties themselves, the
actors, sir, will show whereuntil it doth amount: for
mine own part, I am, as they say, but to parfect one
man in one poor man, Pompion the Great, sir.

BIRON. Art thou one of the Worthies?

COST. It pleased them to think me worthy of
Pompion the Great: for mine own part, I know
not the degree of the Worthy, but I am to stand
for him.

BIRON. Go, bid them prepare.

COST. We will turn it finely off, sir; we will
take some care. [Exit.

KING. Biron, they will shame us: let them not
approach.

BIRON. We are shame-proof, my lord: and 'tis
some policy
To have one show worse than the king's and his
company.

KING. I say they shall not come.

PRIN. Nay, my good lord, let me o'errule you now:
That sport best pleases that doth least know how:
Where zeal strives to content, and the contents
Dies in the zeal of that which it presents:
Their form confounded makes most form in mirth,
When great things labouring perish in their birth.

BIRON. A right description of our sport, my lord.

Enter ARMADO.

ARM. Anointed, I implore so much expense of thy
royal sweet breath as will utter a brace of words.

*[Converses apart with the KING, and
delivers him a paper.*

PRIN. Doth this man serve God?

BIRON. Why ask you?

PRIN. He speaks not like a man of God's making.

ARM. That is all one, my fair, sweet, honey
monarch; for, I protest, the schoolmaster is ex-
ceeding fantastical; too too vain, too too vain:
but we will put it, as they say, to fortuna de la
guerra. I wish you the peace of mind, most
royal complement! *[Exit.*

KING. Here is like to be a good presence of
Worthies. He presents Hector of Troy; the
swain, Pompey the Great; the parish curate,
Alexander; Armado's page, Hercules; the pedant,
Judas Maccabæus:

And if these four Worthies in their first show thrive,
These four will change habits, and present the
other five.

BIRON. There is five in the first show.

KING. You are deceived ; 'tis not so.

BIRON. The pedant, the braggart, the hedge-
priest, the fool and the boy :—

Abate throw at novum, and the whole world again
Cannot pick out five such, take each one in his vein.

KING. The ship is under sail, and here she comes
amain.

Enter Costard, for Pompey.

Cost. I Pompey am,—

BOVET. You lie, you are not he.

Cost. I Pompey am,—

BOVET. With libbard's head on knee.

BIRON. Well said, old mocker : I must needs be
friends with thee.

Cost. I Pompey am, Pompey surnamed the Big,—

DUM. The Great.

Cost. It is, 'Great,' sir :—

Pompey surnamed the Great ;
That oft in field, with targe and shield, did make
my foe to sweat :

And travelling along this coast, I here am come
by chance,

And lay my arms before the legs of this sweet
lass of France.

If your ladyship would say, 'Thanks, Pompey,'
I had done.

PRIN. Great thanks, great Pompey.

COST. 'Tis not so much worth; but I hope I was perfect: I made a little fault in 'Great.'

BIRON. My hat to a halfpenny, Pompey proves the best Worthy.

Enter SIR NATHANIEL, for Alexander.

NATH. When in the world I lived, I was the world's commander;

By east, west, north, and south, I spread my conquering might:

My scutcheon plain declares that I am Alisander,—

BOYET. Your nose says, no, you are not; for it stands too right.

BIRON. Your nose smells 'no' in this, most tender-smelling knight.

PRIN. The conqueror is dismay'd. Proceed, good Alexander.

NATH. When in the world I lived, I was the world's commander,

BOYET. Most true, 'tis right; you were so, Alisander.

BIRON. Pompey the Great,—

COST. Your servant, and Costard.

BIRON. Take away the conqueror, take away Alisander.

COST. [To SIR NATH.] O, sir, you have overthrown Alisander the conqueror! You will be scraped out of the painted cloth for this: your lion, that holds his poll-axe sitting on a close-stool, will be given to Ajax: he will be the ninth Worthy. A conqueror, and afeared to speak! run away for shame, Alisander.

[NATH. *retires.*] There, an't shall please you ; a foolish mild man ; an honest man, look you, and soon dashed. He is a marvellous good neighbour, faith, and a very good bowler : but, for Alisander, —alas, you see how 'tis,—a little o'erparted. But there are Worthies a-coming will speak their mind in some other sort.

PRIN. Stand aside, good Pompey.

Enter HOLOFERNES, for Judas ; and MOTH,
for Hercules.

HOL. Great Hercules is presented by this imp,
Whose club kill'd Cerberus, that three-headed
canis ;

And when he was a babe, a child, a shrimp,
Thus did he strangle serpents in his manus.

Quoniam he seemeth in minority,
Ergo I come with this apology.
Keep some state in thy exit, and vanish.

[MOTH *retires.*

Judas I am,—

DUM. A Judas !

HOL. Not Iscariot, sir.

Judas I am, ycliped Maccabæus.

DUM. Judas Maccabæus clipt is plain Judas.

BIRON. A kissing traitor. How art thou proved

HOL. Judas I am,— [Judas ?

DUM. The more shame for you, Judas.

HOL. What mean you, sir ?

BOVET. To make Judas hang himself.

HOL. Begin, sir ; you are my elder.

BIRON. Well followed : Judas was hanged on an elder.

HOL. I will not be put out of countenance.

BIRON. Because thou hast no face.

HOL. What is this ?

BOYET. A cittern-head.

DUM. The head of a bodkin.

BIRON. A Death's face in a ring.

LONG. The face of an old Roman coin, scarce seen.

BOYET. The pominel of Cæsar's falchion.

DUM. The carved-bone face on a flask.

BIRON. Saint George's half-cheek in a brooch.

DUM. Ay, and in a brooch of lead.

BIRON. Ay, and worn in the cap of a tooth-drawer.

And now forward ; for we have put thee in countenance.

HOL. You have put me out of countenance.

BIRON. False ; we have given thee faces.

HOL. But you have out-faced them all.

BIRON. An thou wert a lion, we would do so.

BOYET. Therefore, as he is an ass, let him go.

And so adieu, sweet Jude ! nay, why dost thou stay ?

DUM. For the latter end of his name.

BIRON. For the ass to the Jude ; give it him :--
Jud-as, away !

HOL. This is not generous, not gentle, not humble.

BOYET. A light for Monsieur Judas ! it grows dark, he may stumble. [HOL. retires.

PRIN. Alas, poor Maccabæus, how hath he been baited !

Enter ARMADO, for Hector.

BIRON. Hide thy head, Achilles: here comes
Hector in arms.

DUM. Though my mocks come home by me, I
will now be merry.

KING. Hector was but a Troyan in respect of this.

BOYET. But is this Hector?

KING. I think Hector was not so clean-timbered.

LONG. His leg is too big for Hector's.

DUM. More calf, certain.

BOYET. No; he is best indued in the small.

BIRON. This cannot be Hector.

DUM. He's a god or a painter; for he makes faces.

ARM. The armipotent Mars, of lances the almighty,
Gave Hector a gift,—

DUM. A gilt nutmeg.

BIRON. A lemon.

LONG. Stuck with cloves.

DUM. No, cloven.

ARM. Peace!—

The armipotent Mars, of lances the almighty,
Gave Hector a gift, the heir of Ilion;
A man so breathed, that certain he would fight; yea
From morn till night, out of his pavilion.

I am that flower,—

DUM. That mint.

LONG. That columbine.

ARM. Sweet Lord Longaville, rein thy tongue.

LONG. I must rather give it the rein, for it runs
against Hector.

DUM. Ay, and Hector's a greyhound.

ARM. The sweet war-man is dead and rotten ;
sweet chucks, beat not the bones of the buried :
when he breathed, he was a man. But I will
forward with my device. [To the PRINCESS] Sweet
royalty, bestow on me the sense of hearing.

PRIN. Speak, brave Hector : we are much
delighted.

ARM. I do adore thy sweet grace's slipper.

BOVET. [Aside to DUM.] Loves her by the foot.

DUM. [Aside to BOVET] He may not by the
yard.

ARM. This Hector far surmounted Hannibal,—

COST. The party is gone, fellow Hector, she is
gone ; she is two months on her way.

ARM. What meanest thou ?

COST. Faith, unless you play the honest Troyan,
the poor wench is cast away : she's quick ; the
child brags in her belly already : 'tis yours.

ARM. Dost thou infamonize me among poten-
tates ? thou shalt die.

COST. Then shall Hector be whipped for Jaque-
netta that is quick by him and hanged for Pompey
that is dead by him.

DUM. Most rare Pompey !

BOVET. Renowned Pompey !

BIRON. Greater than great, great, great, great
Pompey ! Pompey the Huge !

DUM. Hector trembles.

BIRON. Pompey is moved. More Ates, more
Ates ! stir them on ! stir them on !

DUM. Hector will challenge him.

BIRON. Ay, if a' have no more man's blood in 's belly than will sup a flea.

ARM. By the north pole, I do challenge thee.

COST. I will not fight with a pole, like a northern man: I'll slash; I'll do it by the sword. I beseech you, let me borrow my arms again.

DUM. Room for the incensed Worthies!

COST. I'll do it in my shirt.

DUM. Most resolute Pompey!

MOTH. Master, let me take you a button-hole lower. Do you not see Pompey is uncasing for the combat? What mean you? You will lose your reputation.

ARM. Gentlemen and soldiers, pardon me; I will not combat in my shirt.

DUM. You may not deny it: Pompey hath made the challenge.

ARM. Sweet bloods, I both may and will.

BIRON. What reason have you for 't?

ARM. The naked truth of it is, I have no shirt; I go woolward for penance.

BOVET. True, and it was enjoined him in Rome for want of linen: since when, I'll be sworn, he wore none but a dishclout of Jaquenetta's, and that a' wears next his heart for a favour.

Enter MERCADER.

MER. God save you, madam!

PRIN. Welcome, Mercader;
But that thou interrupt'st our merriment.

MER. I am sorry, madam; for the news I bring
Is heavy in my tongue. The king your father—

PRIN. Dead, for my life !

MER. Even so ; my tale is told.

BIRON. Worthies, away ! the scene begins to cloud.

ARM. For mine own part, I breathe free breath.
I have seen the day of wrong through the little
hole of discretion, and I will right myself like a
soldier.

[*Exeunt* Worthies.]

KING. How fares your majesty ?

PRIN. Boyet, prepare ; I will away to-night.

KING. Madam, not so ; I do beseech you, stay.

PRIN. Prepare, I say. I thank you, gracious lords,
For all your fair endeavours ; and entreat,
Out of a new-sad soul, that you vouchsafe
In your rich wisdom to excuse or hide
The liberal opposition of our spirits,
If over-boldly we have borne ourselves
In the converse of breath : your gentleness
Was guilty of it. Farewell, worthy lord !
A heavy heart bears not a nimble tongue :
Excuse me so, coming too short of thanks
For my great suit so easily obtain'd.

KING. The extreme parts of time extremely forms
All causes to the purpose of his speed,
And often at his very loose decides
That which long process could not arbitrate :
And though the mourning brow of progeny
Forbid the smiling courtesy of love
The holy suit which fain it would convince,
Yet, since love's argument was first on foot,
Let not the cloud of sorrow justle it

From what it purposed ; since, to wail friends lost
Is not by much so wholesome-profitable
As to rejoice at friends but newly found.

PRIN. I understand you not: my griefs are double.

BIRON. Honest plain words best pierce the ear
of grief ;

And by these badges understand the king.
For your fair sakes have we neglected time,
Play'd foul play with our oaths: your beauty, ladies,
Hath much deform'd us, fashioning our humours
Even to the opposed end of our intents :
And what in us hath seem'd ridiculous,—
As love is full of unbefitting strains,
All wanton as a child, skipping and vain,
Form'd by the eye and therefore, like the eye,
Full of strange shapes, of habits and of forms,
Varying in subjects as the eye doth roll
To every varied object in his glance :
Which parti-coated presence of loose love
Put on by us, if, in your heavenly eyes,
Have misbecomed our oaths and gravities,
Those heavenly eyes, that look into these faults,
Suggested us to make. Therefore, ladies,
Our love being yours, the error that love makes
Is likewise yours: we to ourselves prove false,
By being once false for ever to be true
To those that make us both,—fair ladies, you :
And even that falsehood, in itself a sin,
Thus purifies itself and turns to grace.

PRIN. We have received your letters full of love;

Your favours, the ambassadors of love ;
And, in our maiden council, rated them
At courtship, pleasant jest and courtesy,
As bombast and as lining to the time :
But more devout than this in our respects
Have we not been ; and therefore met your loves
In their own fashion, like a merriment.

DUM. Our letters, madam, show'd much more
than jest.

LONG. So did our looks.

Ros. We did not quote them so.

KING. Now, at the latest minute of the hour,
Grant us your loves.

PRIN. A time, methinks, too short
To make a world-without-end bargain in.
No, no, my lord, your grace is perjured much,
Full of dear guiltiness ; and therefore this :
If for my love, as there is no such cause,
You will do aught, this shall you do for me :
Your oath I will not trust ; but go with speed
To some forlorn and naked hermitage,
Remote from all the pleasures of the world ;
There stay until the twelve celestial signs
Have brought about the annual reckoning.
If this austere insociable life
Change not your offer made in heat of blood ;
If frosts and fasts, hard lodging and thin weeds
Nip not the gaudy blossoms of your love,
But that it bear this trial and last love ;
Then, at the expiration of the year,

Come challenge me, challenge me by these deserts,
And, by this virgin palm now kissing thine,
I will be thine ; and till that instant shut
My woeful self up in a mourning house,
Raining the tears of lamentation
For the remembrance of my father's death.
If this thou do deny, let our hands part,
Neither intitled in the other's heart.

KING. If this, or more than this, I would deny,
To flatter up these powers of mine with rest,
The sudden hand of death close up mine eye !

Hence ever then my heart is in thy breast.

[BIRON. And what to me, my love ? and what
to me ?

Ros. You must be purged too, your sins are
rack'd,
You are attaint with faults and perjury :
Therefore if you my favour mean to get,
A twelvemonth shall you spend, and never rest,
But seek the weary beds of people sick.]

DUM. But what to me, my love ? but what to me ?
A wife ?

KATH. A beard, fair health, and honesty ;
With three-fold love I wish you all these three.

DUM. O, shall I say, I thank you, gentle wife ?

KATH. Not so, my lord ; a twelvemonth and a day
I'll mark no words that smooth-faced wooers say :
Come when the king doth to my lady come ;
Then, if I have much love, I'll give you some.

DUM. I'll serve thee true and faithfully till then.

KATH. Yet swear not, lest ye be forsworn again.

LONG. What says Maria?

MAR. At the twelvemonth's end
I'll change my black gown for a faithful friend.

LONG. I'll stay with patience; but the time is long.

MAR. The liker you; few taller are so young.

BIRON. Studies my lady? mistress, look on me;
Behold the window of my heart, mine eye,
What humble suit attends thy answer there:
Impose some service on me for thy love.

Ros. Oft have I heard of you, my Lord Biron,
Before I saw you; and the world's large tongue
Proclaims you for a man replete with mocks,
Full of comparisons and wounding flouts,
Which you on all estates will execute
That lie within the mercy of your wit.
To weed this wormwood from your fruitful brain,
And therewithal to win me, if you please,
Without the which I am not to be won,
You shall this twelvemonth term from day to day
Visit the speechless sick and still converse
With groaning wretches; and your task shall be,
With all the fierce endeavour of your wit
To enforce the pained impotent to smile.

BIRON. To move wild laughter in the throat of
death?

It cannot be; it is impossible;

Mirth cannot move a soul in agony.

Ros. Why, that's the way to choke a gibing
spirit,

Whose influence is begot of that loose grace
Which shallow laughing hearers give to fools :
A jest's prosperity lies in the ear
Of him that hears it, never in the tongue
Of him that makes it : then, if sickly ears,
Deaf'd with the clamours of their own dear groans,
Will hear your idle scorns, continue then,
And I will have you and that fault withal ;
But if they will not, throw away that spirit,
And I shall find you empty of that fault,
Right joyful of your reformation.

BIRON. A twelvemonth ! well ; befall what will
befall,
I 'll jest a twelvemonth in an hospital.

PRIN. [To the KING] Ay, sweet my lord ; and so
I take my leave.

KING. No, madam ; we will bring you on your
way.

BIRON. Our wooing doth not end like an old play ;
Jack hath not Jill : these ladies' courtesy
Might well have made our sport a comedy.

KING. Come, sir, it wants a twelvemonth and a
day,
And then 'twill end.

BIRON. That's too long for a play.

Re-enter ARMADO.

ARM. Sweet majesty, vouchsafe me,—

PRIN. Was not that Hector ?

DUM. The worthy knight of Troy.

ARM. I will kiss thy royal finger, and take leave.

I am a votary; I have vowed to Jaquenetta to hold the plough for her sweet love three years. But, most esteemed greatness, will you hear the dialogue that the two learned men have compiled in praise of the owl and the cuckoo? it should have followed in the end of our show.

KING. Call them forth quickly; we will do so.

ARM. Holla! approach.

*Re-enter HOLOFERNES, NATHANIEL, MOTH,
COSTARD, and others.*

This side is Hiems, Winter, this Ver, the Spring; the one maintained by the owl, the other by the cuckoo. Ver, begin.

THE SONG.

SPRING.

*When daisies pied and violets blue
And lady-smocks all silver-white
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight,
The cuckoo then on every tree,
Mocks married men; for thus sings he,
Cuckoo;*

*Cuckoo, cuckoo: O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!*

*When shepherds pipe on oaten straws
And merry larks are ploughmen's clocks,
When turtles tread, and rooks, and daws,
And maidens bleach their summer smocks,*

*The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men ; for thus sings he,
Cuckoo ;
Cuckoo, cuckoo : O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear !*

WINTER.

*When icicles hang by the wall
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail
And Tom bears logs into the hall
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipp'd and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-whit ;
Tu-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.
When all aloud the wind doth blow
And coughing drowns the parson's saw
And birds sit brooding in the snow
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-whit ;
Tu-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan both keel the pot.*

ARM. The words of Mercury are harsh after the
songs of Apollo. You that way : we this way.

[*Exeunt.*

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